INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF SCHOOL INSPECTIONS ACT, 1996

PONTARDDULAIS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Upper James Street
Pontarddulais
Swansea, SA4 1JD

School Number: 670/2186

Date of Inspection: 14th – 17th March, 2005

MRS. EIRWEN GRIFFITHS

REGISTERED INSPECTOR: WO50/17562

8th April, 2005

UNDER ESTYN CONTRACT NUMBER: T/141/04P

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Pontarddulais Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose 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 more information about their children's 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.

The inspection of Pontarddulais Primary School took place between 14th and 17th March, 2005. An independent team of three inspectors, led by Mrs. Eirwen Griffiths, M.Phil., M.Ed., 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.

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The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgments 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.

Year-Groups and Key Stages

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

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year-group of pupils in a primary school who attain the age of five during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year-group of pupils who attain the age of six during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year-group of students who attain the age of eighteen 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. Pontarddulais Primary School is situated some eight miles to the north-west of Swansea close to the A48 trunk road from Swansea to Carmarthen. Its catchment consists mainly of a mixture of traditional private dwellings and a high proportion of local-authority houses situated on two large estates. In recent years, the area has suffered the effects of economic recession, with the closure of industries and local businesses. Approximately a third of the catchment is economically disadvantaged, whilst the remainder is neither disadvantaged nor relatively prosperous. The background and circumstances of pupils are such that just over 30% receive free school meals, compared with an average of 18.5% for Wales as a whole. Some 24% of pupils also have special educational needs, a figure which again significantly exceeds the national average for Wales.

2. Baseline assessments indicate that pupils enter the school with a wide range of differing abilities. An increasing number show limited social and communication skills and start from a low level of attainment. Initiatives such as family learning and parenting classes have been introduced to meet the needs of younger pupils and their families. As many pupils live in Dulais East, a designated "Community First" area, the school has benefited from a regeneration grant enabling it to set up an out-of-school learning programme.

3. English is the sole or predominant home language spoken by almost all pupils. No pupil comes from a Welsh-speaking home. A small percentage come from ethnic-minority families where the first language is neither English nor Welsh.

4. Currently, the school has a total roll of 358 pupils aged three to eleven years, including forty-two nursery children who attend on a part-time basis. Following a decline in numbers up to the year 2000, the roll has been fairly constant over the last four years, partly as a result of the school's popularity with parents. Approximately 12% of pupils currently come from outside the approved catchment area.

5. The school was last inspected in April, 1999. No significant changes have been made to the age-range or character of the school since that time. The present headteacher has been in post since January, 1997.

The school's priorities and targets

6. The main priorities and targets of the school are currently the following:

- developing pupils' key skills across the curriculum;
- making effective use of assessment information;
- further developing the role of subject co-ordinators in evaluating their areas of responsibility;

- continuing to develop the use of interactive whiteboards throughout the school;
- renewing the Quality Mark;
- increasing opportunities for teaching and learning through outdoor play in the Early Years;
- improving pupils' problem-solving and investigative skills in mathematics.

Summary

7. This is a very good school, with high standards of achievement, exemplary leadership and management, and many outstanding features in all areas of work, including pastoral care and guidance.

8. The inspection team agrees with the school's own judgments in four of the seven key questions and, in the other three, considers grades to be higher than those put forward by the school.

Table of grades awarded

9. Grades are currently judged to be the following:

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

10. This is an exceptional result indicating that the school is performing at a level well in excess of normal standards.

Standards

11. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs, and pupils make very good progress towards the desirable outcomes for learning.

12. Standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, number, and information and communications technology are very good overall, with particularly good standards at Key Stage 2.

13. Pupils at both key stages make very good progress in subjects across the curriculum. The school uses a wide range of analyses and data to set challenging targets and to monitor progress against appropriate benchmarks. Pupils are fully involved in assessing their own progress and are aware of what they need to do

next in order to raise standards. They make very good progress towards their potential in acquiring new knowledge, understanding and skills. Key skills are well applied across the curriculum.

14. Creative skills are very good in all areas. Pupils are imaginative and creative in their ideas, writing, composition, design and performance. There are some outstanding examples of creative work in subjects such as English, art, design and technology, and information and communications technology. Pupils perform enthusiastically on whole-school occasions, such as assemblies, concerts and eisteddfodau. They appraise and evaluate their performances in order to identify areas where further improvements can be made.

15. According to teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 last summer, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 or above was well above local and national averages in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science, despite a comparatively low level of attainment upon entry to the school. High levels were also attained in all three core subjects in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2.

16. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 show a continuing upward trend over the last four years. The core-subject indicator has been consistently above local and national figures, and the school achieves very well in comparison with similar schools.

17. Results at Key Stage 2 have also improved over the same period, with a large number of pupils achieving Level 4 or above. The core-subject indicator is well above the averages for the area and for Wales as a whole. When compared with similar schools in Wales, the school's performance is significantly better than the average. A significant number of pupils achieve the higher grade of Level 5.

18. No major differences occur between the performance of boys and girls.

19. Very good progress is made by pupils with special educational needs who respond well to the high quality of provision made by the school.

20. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is of a very high standard. All pupils understand what is expected of them and appreciate the consequences that inappropriate behaviour may entail both for themselves and others. The school exudes an orderly and caring ethos.

21. Average attendance in the three terms prior to the inspection was 92%. Unauthorised absence is minimal. Most pupils arrive punctually at the start of the school day.

The quality of education and training

22. Lessons observed during the inspection indicate that the quality of teaching is currently as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
44%	41%	15%	-	-

23. There were outstanding features in 44% of lessons and no significant shortcomings in 85% of classes. This greatly exceeds targets set by the Welsh Assembly Government.

24. No subjects were specifically identified for inspection but, in the lessons seen, good and very good teaching was one of the major strengths of the school. This has a very positive influence on pupils' learning, behaviour and attitudes. The quality of teaching contributes significantly to the very good standards achieved by most pupils.

25. Where teaching displays outstanding features, the pace of the lesson is brisk and purposeful, tasks are appropriately timed, and pupils are aware of their teachers' high expectations. Many teachers make very good use of praise to encourage and motivate pupils. The quality of questioning is well judged to test understanding and to encourage the development of oral skills. An air of purpose and engagement characterises many lessons, as pupils and teachers work closely together.

26. Assessment is one of the many strengths of the school and is consistently used to guide the planning of work and to identify areas requiring further development. Progress is regularly tracked and monitored.

27. Annual reports to parents are detailed and informative, explaining the criteria for success in subjects and providing helpful advice on how pupils can raise their standards.

28. The curriculum is broad, balanced, flexible and relevant, and fully meets statutory requirements. Experiences for children under five are based on the *Desirable Outcomes for Learning* and provide successfully for pupils at both nursery and reception level.

29. Strong emphasis is placed on continuity and progression in learning between year groups and key stages. Teachers have a very good overview of the breadth and depth of the curriculum, and have reviewed and revised all schemes of work to improve the quality of curriculum planning.

30. The school provides a very good range of extracurricular activities, including sport, instrumental music, art, mathematics, and information and communications technology. A significant number of pupils take advantage of these opportunities to extend their learning and broaden their interests. Pupils are encouraged to compete in local and national competitions, and there are many planned visits to places of interest, including galleries, theatres and museums.

31. Older pupils benefit from a variety of residential visits to places such as Margam Park, Llangrannog and Danycoed. These are valuable in promoting personal and social skills, particularly in placing an emphasis upon the ability to work together and to take responsibility for personal organisation.

32. Daily acts of collective worship are of high quality, with pupils participating enthusiastically through song and performance. Local ministers are regular and

welcome visitors to assemblies, where pupils show a very good level of knowledge and understanding of the Christian tradition in their responses to questioning. A number of subjects make an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual development by providing opportunities to reflect on creative work, poetry, music and the natural world.

33. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, and show respect for each other as well as for adults and the school environment and resources. Many are enthusiastic contributors to a variety of charities and take responsibility for organising events to raise money. They also take part in a variety of health and citizenship initiatives.

34. The school provides comprehensive and helpful information for parents, who are given many opportunities to participate in school life and discuss their children's progress in parents' evenings and open days. Parents' views are invited through questionnaires and meetings of an active parent-teacher association. The school organises popular workshops for parents through its Family Learning and Language and Play groups. Mathematics workshops encourage parents to share and support their children's learning in the subject.

35. Very good links have been established with the receiving comprehensive school and with the other primary schools in the area. These links ensure continuity in pupils' learning, especially through a successful project to track progress in key skills into Key Stage 3.

36. The heritage and culture of Wales are widely celebrated across the school, with prominent use of Welsh in displays and daily classroom routines. Considerable efforts are made to promote competent use of Welsh and to encourage bilingualism.

37. Pupils benefit from an effective system of care and support, which is well integrated into all aspects of the work of the school. Very good induction programmes, for example, enable nursery children to settle in to the school at their own time and pace.

38. High priority is given to pupils' safety and welfare. All members of staff receive regular training in first-aid and are well informed of the specific physical and medical needs of pupils. Clear procedures and policies are in place, and regular risk assessments are undertaken to ensure the continuing safety of the school environment. Child-protection procedures follow local recommendations. Good liaison takes place with external agencies.

39. Policies on sex education, bullying, equal opportunities, diversity and race discrimination reflect best practice and are subject to regular review. All pupils have equal access to school activities during the school day and in after-school clubs.

40. Pupils are carefully supervised at all times and are encouraged to show consideration and respect for each other through initiatives such as the Playground Friends scheme.

41. Attendance, absence and lateness are recorded in line with statutory requirements. Clear targets are in place to reduce levels of absence and improve punctuality. Attendance data is analysed on a weekly basis in order to identify trends and tackle unauthorised absence at an early stage.

42. Good partnerships with a variety of local businesses help to improve pupils' understanding of the workplace.

43. Procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs conform to the principles in the national Code of Practice. An efficient and conscientious co-ordinator ensures that meticulous records are kept of pupils' progress and that statutory requirements are fulfilled in relation to formal statements. Work undertaken in her withdrawal group is motivating and varied, and accords with targets identified in individual educational plans. Class teachers pay close attention to the special needs of individual pupils and ensure that tasks are differentiated appropriately. Strong emphasis is placed on the consolidation and progressive extension of skills and on full access to all areas of the curriculum. Very good support is provided by classroom assistants. Parents are kept properly informed and contribute to regular reviews of progress.

Leadership and management

44. Clear, effective, stimulating leadership is provided by the headteacher, who ensures that aims are purposefully pursued and largely achieved. Management is characterised by a common sense of purpose and very good relationships. The acting deputy works closely with the headteacher in promoting values and standards, whilst the senior management team undertakes its role efficiently and effectively.

45. Curriculum development is one of the major strengths of the school. Subject co-ordinators work conscientiously to maintain good standards and to secure continuity and progression in learning. Very good communication takes place with senior managers through regular meetings, written reports and discussions. Well-established procedures are in place for monitoring and evaluating standards of teaching and learning.

46. The governing body undertakes its duties effectively and is well informed about all aspects of the life of the school, including the curriculum and standards of achievement in different subjects. Expenditure is very well monitored, assessed and controlled. Close liaison and a highly-successful partnership with the headteacher have led to very good strategic management and direction for the school.

47. Much hard work has been undertaken by the headteacher, staff and governors to develop a thorough, and largely accurate, self-evaluation process which recognises the strengths of the school and indicates aspects which require further improvement. High standards are partly achieved through effective monitoring strategies, which include examination of teachers' planning, direct classroom observation and regular scrutiny of pupils' work.

48. Governors are kept properly informed of subject developments through regular reports and discussions with curriculum co-ordinators. A number of governors are able to visit classrooms to see teaching and learning for themselves.

49. Very good use is made of test results and other data to identify new targets for improvement. Senior managers are constantly seeking ways of further developing and extending pupils' achievements.

50. The school development plan is a sound working document which sets timescales for targets and indicates priorities and costs. Progress is reviewed on a regular basis.

51. Effective action has been taken to implement the recommendations in the last inspection report, particularly in respect of ensuring that lesson plans identify clear aims and objectives and that manageable procedures are in place for monitoring and evaluating standards of teaching and learning.

52. Good use is made of resources to ensure that the school has appropriate staffing for present pupil numbers. Teachers are effectively deployed, and are suitably qualified and experienced. Very good liaison takes place with nursery nurses and classroom assistants, all of whom make a valuable contribution to the overall quality of learning.

53. High priority is given to the continuing professional development of all members of staff. Training is well related to the specific needs of the school.

54. Performance-management and staff-appraisal systems are well established and function effectively. Good support by the school secretary, caretaker, midday supervisors and canteen staff ensures that day-to-day management is smooth and efficient.

55. Effective use is made of all available accommodation, including corridor space. One of the two halls serves as a temporary school museum, whilst the other is regularly used for physical education, music and assemblies as well as a variety of after-school clubs and activities.

56. Buildings are well maintained overall. Adequate access is provided for pupils and visitors with physical disabilities. Two classes, including the nursery, are housed in well-decorated demountable classrooms. Colourful, high-quality displays throughout the school celebrate the interests and achievements of pupils and enhance the learning environment.

57. A large, well-kept playing field and appropriately marked-out hardcore areas enable pupils to participate in a range of sports and other activities.

58. All classes make full use of a wide range of good-quality learning resources, including a well-equipped computer suite and school library facilities. Spending decisions are clearly linked to priorities and targets in the school development plan. Expenditure is closely monitored and reviewed.

59. Overall, the school provides very good value for money.

Recommendations

It is recommended that action is taken to:

R1. maintain and, where possible, extend the very high quality of education provided for pupils;

R3. continue to develop the role of co-ordinators and provide further opportunities for them to observe classroom practice in their subjects.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within forty-five 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 1: good with outstanding features

60. The findings of the inspection team differ from the judgment of Grade 2 in the school's self-evaluation report. In the team's opinion, standards in this area are higher than those assessed by the school.

61. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs, and pupils make very good progress towards the desirable outcomes for learning.

62. Pupils achieved very well in the 2004 Key Stage 1 teacher assessments and in the Key Stage 2 national assessment tests in English, mathematics and science. The proportion achieving Level 2 or above in all the core subjects at Key Stage 1 is well above local and national averages. Baseline assessments of children entering the school at nursery and reception level show that they have a comparatively low level of attainment, especially in social and communication skills.

63. Teacher assessments of pupils' standards at the end of Key Stage 1 show a continuing upward trend over the last four years. The core-subject indicator has been consistently above local and national figures, and the school achieves very well in comparison with similar schools.

64. Achievements in the Key Stage 2 national assessment tests show a consistently improving picture over the last four years in English, mathematics and science, with a large number of pupils achieving Level 4 and above. The core-subject indicator is well above the averages for Wales and for the local authority. In 2004, the indicator was 86.1% as compared to the Wales figure of 72.3% and the figure of 74.2% for the local education authority. When compared with similar schools, the figure is significantly higher than the average of 68%. A significant number of pupils achieve the higher grade of Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2. There is no major difference between the performance of boys and girls.

65. Pupils who are assessed with a range of special educational needs make very good progress. They respond and achieve very well to the high quality of the school's provision.

66. Performance data analysis over the years shows that there is a consistent upward trend and that residual value is added as pupils progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.

67. Standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing are very good across the school, with particularly good standards at Key Stage 2. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. They show respect for each other's views in class discussions, and many give extended and thoughtful responses to

questioning. Most pupils are confident and articulate speakers who use subject terminology accurately and in the correct context. Relationships are very good so that there is effective collaboration when pupils work together in pairs and groups. As they mature, pupils are increasingly prepared to take responsibility for their own learning, adopting strategies which enable them to make very good progress.

68. Reading skills are very good overall. Those pupils who have reading difficulties receive effective specialist support when withdrawn from lessons and make very good progress. Most pupils read fluently, accurately and expressively and have very good understanding of a range of texts, diagrams, graphs and information on the Internet. There is secure evidence that pupils enjoy their reading experiences and develop individual tastes for particular genres of literature. Pupils demonstrate very good standards in retrieving information and make regular use of the class and school libraries.

69. Writing skills are good overall, with some outstanding written work at Key Stage 2. Pupils make very good progress in developing their style and produce well-planned pieces of extended writing in subjects across the curriculum. Standards of presentation, spelling and punctuation are good, and pupils learn to draft and redraft their written work, showing a growing ability to be self-critical in their approach as they mature. Some examples of research projects are insightful and detailed, with pupils making full use of opportunities to investigate and develop the topic in hand.

70. Numerical skills are very good overall. Pupils produce accurate and thoughtful work, showing a clear grasp of the mathematical concepts under consideration. There is good evidence of the use of a range of mathematical techniques in calculations, measurement and plotting graphs to analyse and illustrate data. Pupils are successful in applying their number skills to situations in everyday life.

71. Skills in information and communications technology are very good across the school and reflect the major emphasis placed on developing this area of provision over the last two years. Effective use is made of information technology to deliver subjects across the curriculum. Pupils are confident and enthusiastic in their use of computers and are able to record, save and analyse data. They operate equipment accurately and make very good use of information and communications technology to enhance the presentation of their work and to extend their ideas.

72. Pupils at both key stages make very good progress in subjects across the curriculum. The school uses a wide range of analyses and data to set challenging targets and to monitor progress against appropriate benchmarks. Pupils are fully involved in assessing their own progress and are aware of what they need to do next in order to raise standards. They make very good progress towards their potential in acquiring new knowledge, understanding and skills.

73. Pupils make very good progress in acquiring and developing their key skills in lessons. They are made fully aware of which key skills are being targeted in particular lessons.

74. Problem-solving skills are very good across the school. Pupils are confident in approaching investigative work in a range of subjects; they work collaboratively together and display an increasing sense of independence in extending their learning. Teachers encourage them to develop their own strategies for approaching investigations and solving problems.

75. Whole-school initiatives, such as the Playground Friends scheme, encourage older pupils to support and care for the welfare of their younger peers. In lessons, pupils work together positively and co-operatively in pairs and small groups. Warm relationships in all areas of the school ensure that pupils make very good progress in developing their personal and social skills.

76. Creative skills are very good in all areas of the school. Pupils are imaginative and creative in their ideas, writing, composition, design and performance. There are some outstanding examples of creative work in subjects such as English, art, design and technology, and information and communications technology. Pupils perform enthusiastically on whole-school occasions, such as assemblies, concerts and eisteddfodau. They appraise and evaluate their performances in order to identify areas where they could improve.

77. All pupils are given whole-class and individual targets which they negotiate and discuss with their teachers and parents. They are increasingly active in setting their own targets, showing a good awareness of areas which require further improvement.

78. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is of a very high standard. All pupils understand the school's expectations for good behaviour and the consequences that inappropriate behaviour may entail for themselves and others. The school has an orderly and caring ethos, and there are very good procedures for promoting good behaviour.

79. Relationships between pupils and teachers, and between pupils themselves, are very good. Pupils are courteous and considerate, and there are warm relationships with teachers. There is a strong ethos of mutual respect.

80. Pupils move around the school in an orderly and sensible way. They play happily together in the playground and are keen to support those pupils who might have problems.

81. Average attendance in the three terms prior to the inspection was 92%. Unauthorised absence is minimal, and most pupils arrive punctually at the start of the school day.

The Quality of Education and Training

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

82. The findings of the inspection team match the judgment of Grade 1 in the school's self-evaluation report.

83. Lessons observed during the inspection indicate that the quality of teaching is as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
44%	41%	15%	-	-

84. There were no significant shortcomings in teaching in 85% of classes. There were outstanding features in 44% of lessons. This greatly exceeds targets set by the Welsh Assembly Government.

85. No subjects were specifically identified for inspection but, in the lessons seen, good and very good quality teaching was one of the major strengths of the school. This has a very positive influence on pupils' learning, behaviour and attitudes. The quality of teaching contributes significantly to the very good standards achieved by the majority of pupils.

86. Teachers are well qualified and have good, and often very good, knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. This secure base of knowledge is rigorously kept up to date through continuous professional development, enabling teachers to plan appropriately challenging work which is well matched to differing needs and abilities. The quality of teachers' cross-curricular planning is another strength of the school.

87. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good, so that learning takes place in a caring and friendly environment. Lessons are characterised by an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy.

88. Teachers know their pupils well. Work is carefully planned to take full account of pupils' differing needs and attainments. Good attention is paid to the needs of pupils of above-average ability to ensure that they are well challenged at an appropriate level. Teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies to ensure concentration and to encourage pupils to make the maximum effort in lessons.

89. Pupils are consistently made aware of learning objectives at the beginning of lessons. Plenary sessions challenge pupils to summarise what they have learned and to evaluate the progress made. Very good links are made between current and previous learning.

90. Where teaching displays outstanding features, the pace of the lesson is brisk and purposeful, tasks are appropriately timed, and pupils are aware of their teachers' high expectations. Many teachers use praise very well to encourage and

motivate pupils. The quality of questioning is well judged to test understanding and to encourage the development of oral skills. An air of purpose and engagement characterises many lessons, as pupils and teachers work closely together.

91. All teachers plan work very carefully. Key skills are well identified and targeted and pupils are made aware of the skills they need to develop. Teachers' planning also pays careful attention to the subject-specific skills which require development in all curricular areas. Teachers have made major strides forward in the use of information and communications technology in all areas of the curriculum, and this has had a significant impact upon the standards achieved.

92. In most lessons, a very good focus is placed upon encouraging investigative approaches to learning. Pupils have a wide range of stimulating "hands-on" experiences – for instance in science, information technology, art and music.

93. Teachers help pupils to extend and consolidate their learning by setting challenging homework tasks which target areas identified as requiring further development. Many of these tasks demand the application of problem-solving, investigative and creative skills. Pupils respond positively to these challenges. Very good examples of project work were scrutinised which showed that pupils had made very good progress in extending their research and presentational skills and that they were developing as confident, independent learners.

94. Teachers work very well together and with classroom learning assistants. Teachers plan together in year groups, and classroom assistants are encouraged to collaborate in the planning and to develop teaching materials and resources.

95. Pupils' work is very well displayed in classrooms and in public areas of the school. The quality of display is a measure of the value the school places upon the efforts of each pupil, and their success is celebrated. Teachers spend a good deal of time and effort in ensuring that the school is an inviting and stimulating learning environment. Teachers give generously of their time outside lessons to help individuals in clubs and other extracurricular activities. These experiences help pupils extend and broaden their learning.

96. There is consistent implementation of the school's policy for equal opportunities. The social, educational, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds of each pupil are carefully considered to ensure that they make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language make good or very good progress in reaching their potential.

97. Teachers systematically monitor and review pupils' progress, using a good range of support procedures to help pupils overcome difficulties. All pupils and their parents are made fully aware of the targets set for them and play an increasing part in setting themselves realistic and manageable targets for improvement. The teaching and support provided for pupils with special educational needs are very good, with work closely matching targets in individual educational plans.

98. Assessment is one of the strengths of the school. It is consistently used to inform the planning of future work and to identify areas requiring further

development. The school has established a very effective system for collating and analysing assessment data from a wide range of tests. Pupils' progress is tracked and monitored regularly.

99. The school places strong emphasis upon data analysis, so that it is fully aware of its performance in a range of criteria. Information gained from assessment is regularly shared with teachers, pupils and their parents so that individual progress can be accurately tracked and areas requiring improvement addressed. This system is well embedded across the school. It is also being effectively used to develop a pilot assessment project with the receiving comprehensive school, so that individual progress can be tracked through into Key Stage 3. This is another example of good practice.

100. The school meets statutory requirements for assessing and reporting on pupils' achievements and standards.

101. Assessments are accurate and fair in a range of tasks and tests. The quality of teachers' marking is good overall. Where there is very good practice, teachers' comments on pupils' work are informative and helpful, and pupils are made fully aware of the next step forward in their learning.

102. Very good quality targets are set to challenge pupils to raise their standards and their performance. Targets are well focused, specific and measurable, and are regularly reviewed with pupils and parents so that clear paths are laid down for improvement. Pupils are becoming increasingly involved in self-evaluation and many set themselves realistic targets which they would like to meet.

103. Monitoring exercises provide teachers with accurate information on which they can report to parents. Parents are fully involved in target-setting and are made aware of the high expectations which the school has of their children. Regular parents' meetings throughout the school year encourage parents to become involved in progress and are useful in identifying and addressing under-achievement.

104. Annual reports are informative and detailed. They explain the criteria for success in subjects and contain helpful advice on how pupils can raise their standards of achievement.

105. Pupils' evaluation of the standards they achieve is well developed and the focus of ongoing initiatives. Records of progress, from the nursery onwards, are kept in progress files which build up into an informative picture of the development of skills, knowledge and understanding over time.

106. Teachers have compiled very good quality portfolios of moderated, annotated work in every area of the curriculum. These are designed to exemplify expected standards at each level in subjects across the curriculum and are effective in ensuring that assessment exercises are accurate and consistent.

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

Grade 1: good with outstanding features

107. The findings of the inspection team match the judgment of Grade 1 in the school's self-evaluation report.

108. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum is broad, balanced, flexible and relevant, and fully meets statutory requirements. Experiences for children under five are based on the *Desirable Outcomes for Learning* and provide successfully for pupils at both nursery and reception level.

109. Strong emphasis is placed on continuity and progression in learning between year groups and key stages. Teachers have a very good overview of the breadth and depth of the curriculum, and have reviewed and revised all schemes of work to improve the quality of curriculum planning.

110. Effective action has been taken to develop the curriculum since the last inspection. In particular, pupils have been provided with increased opportunities to develop their skills in information technology and physical education, whilst appropriate resources have been allocated to provide greater access to library facilities and outdoor education.

111. Pupils receive a rich and varied curriculum, with a wide range of valuable learning experiences. Programmes of study provide very good coverage of all subjects in the National Curriculum, together with religious education.

112. Planning to deliver skills in literacy, number, and information and communications technology is well developed across the curriculum. Rigorous systems are in place for co-ordinating and monitoring the delivery of skills in different subjects, including personal and social education, as well as creative and problem-solving skills. Literacy, numeracy and science weeks provide pupils with good opportunities to extend their knowledge and skills in these areas.

113. The school has made important strides forward in developing pupils' basic and key skills and has been successful in gaining the Basic Skills Quality Mark. Teachers' short-term planning demonstrates that care is taken to identify and focus upon these skills in every lesson.

114. A very good range of extracurricular activities is available in areas such as sport, instrumental music, art, mathematics, and information and communications technology. A significant number of pupils take advantage of these opportunities to extend their learning and broaden their interests. Pupils are encouraged to compete in local and national competitions, and there are many planned visits to places of interest, including galleries, theatres and museums.

115. Older pupils benefit from a variety of residential visits to places such as Margam Park, Llangrannog and Danycoed. These are valuable in promoting

personal and social skills, particularly in placing an emphasis upon the ability to work together and to take responsibility for personal organisation.

116. Daily acts of collective worship are of high quality, with pupils participating enthusiastically through song and performance. Local ministers are regular and welcome visitors to assemblies, where pupils show a very good level of knowledge and understanding of the Christian tradition in their responses to questioning. A number of subjects make an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual development by providing opportunities to reflect on creative work, poetry, music and the natural world.

117. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. They show respect for each other as well as for adults and the school environment and resources. Many are enthusiastic contributors to a variety of charities and take responsibility for organising events to raise money. They also take part in a variety of health and citizenship initiatives.

118. The school council meets regularly. Pupils take their membership very seriously, making decisions confidently and observing formal procedures in meetings, where the emphasis is on the promotion of democratic ideas. Members have shown maturity and initiative, and have been successful in gaining the support of the local Assembly member in improving the school environment.

119. Pupils have very good social skills and co-operate well with each other in lessons and other activities. Relationships throughout the school are very good and pupils make a significant contribution to the maintenance of a civilised society. The Playground Friends scheme is successful in ensuring that older children provide support for younger pupils during breaks and lunch hours.

120. Cultural development is well reflected in many aspects of the curriculum and in extracurricular activities. Pupils benefit from cultural visits to theatres and museums and have very good practical opportunities to work with local artists, craftsmen and musicians. They acquire respect for, and understanding of, the values and traditions of other cultures – for instance, in Europe, India and Africa – and are keen to talk to visitors and teachers about their views and ideas.

121. The school provides comprehensive and helpful information for parents who are given many opportunities to participate in school life and discuss their children's progress in parents' evenings and open days. Parents' views are invited through questionnaires and meetings of an active parent-teacher association. The school organises popular workshops for parents through its Family Learning and Language and Play groups. Mathematics workshops encourage parents to share and support their children's learning in the subject.

122. Very good links have been established with the receiving comprehensive school and with the other primary schools in the cluster. These links ensure continuity in pupils' learning, especially through a successful project to track progress in key skills into Key Stage 3.

123. The Investors-in-People award has enabled the school to forge useful links with schools in a wider area in order to share good practice. Partnerships with local universities and colleges provide a good range of opportunities for students. Trainee teachers help to bring variety and innovation into the classroom and to broaden pupils' experiences.

124. A very productive partnership has been formed with the local community, of which governors are active and knowledgeable members. Many local enterprises provide extracurricular support for pupils and help to ensure that the school environment is improved. Several local groups make full use of the school's facilities for their meetings and activities, whilst working parents value the school's child-care facilities. Strong emphasis is placed on making the school a focus for lifelong learning.

125. Planning for the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* is another major strength of the school. Many very good quality references are made to the history, traditions and culture of Wales throughout the curriculum, particularly in subjects such as history, geography, art, music, Welsh and religious education. The curriculum co-ordinator regularly monitors and evaluates provision. Work on display demonstrates that pupils are given many opportunities to express their ideas, knowledge and understanding in writing, art and music. The Welsh heritage is widely celebrated across the school, with prominent use of Welsh in displays and daily classroom routines.

126. Considerable efforts are made to promote competent use of Welsh and to encourage bilingualism. Pupils make good incidental use of Welsh during the school day and show pleasure in singing Welsh songs and hymns in assemblies and on other occasions. Very good use is made of the local environment and visits to sites further afield to support and reinforce pupils' interest in their culture. Members of the local community are regularly invited to visit the school and to share their knowledge and expertise with pupils.

127. An Eco committee has successfully established systems whereby pupils can become involved in waste management, recycling and energy conservation. The school is successfully working towards the Green Flag Award. Pupils are also responsible for the operation of the school's fruit tuck shop, which they run as a successful business venture. Growing understanding is shown of the importance of sustainable development and the responsibilities of global citizenship.

128. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school.

129. Altogether, pupils receive a range of experiences which reflect national priorities and are given a solid foundation for lifelong learning.

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

Grade 1: good with outstanding features

130. The findings of the inspection team match the judgment of Grade 1 in the school's self-evaluation report.

131. Pupils benefit from an effective system of care and support, which is well integrated into all aspects of the work of the school.

132. Parents are kept well informed of their children's work and progress and are given every opportunity to share their views on developments such as the recent improvements to the outdoor play areas. An active parent-teacher association raises funds for specific projects, and there is good support from individual parents for a range of school activities, including participation in the Family Learning Programmes.

133. Induction programmes for nursery children are very good and enable pupils to settle in at their own time and pace. Good links with the local comprehensive school help to ensure a smooth transition to Key Stage 3.

134. Attendance, absence and lateness are recorded in line with statutory requirements. Clear targets are in place to reduce levels of absence and improve punctuality. Attendance data is analysed on a weekly basis in order to identify trends and tackle unauthorised absence at an early stage.

135. A high priority is given to pupils' safety and welfare. All members of staff receive regular training in first-aid and are well informed of the specific physical and medical needs of pupils. Clear procedures and policies are in place and regular risk assessments are undertaken to ensure the continuing safety of the school environment.

136. Child-protection procedures follow local recommendations. Good liaison takes place with external agencies.

137. The importance of a healthy diet and lifestyle is promoted through participation in the Healthy Schools Initiative.

138. Policies on sex education, bullying, equal opportunities, diversity and race discrimination reflect best practice and are subject to regular review. All pupils have equal access to school activities during the school day and in after-school clubs.

139. Pupils are carefully supervised at all times and are encouraged to show consideration and respect for each other through initiatives such as the Playground Friends scheme.

140. Good partnerships with a variety of local businesses help to improve pupils' understanding of the workplace.

141. Procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs conform to the principles in the national Code of Practice. An efficient and conscientious co-ordinator ensures that meticulous records are kept of pupils' progress and that statutory requirements are fulfilled in relation to formal statements. Work undertaken in her withdrawal group is motivating and varied, and accords with targets identified in individual educational plans.

142. Class teachers pay close attention to the special needs of individual pupils and ensure that tasks are differentiated appropriately. Strong emphasis is placed on the consolidation and progressive extension of skills and on full access to all areas of the curriculum. Very good support is provided by classroom assistants. Parents are kept properly informed and contribute to regular reviews of progress.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: good with outstanding features

143. The findings of the inspection team differ from the judgment of Grade 2 in the school's self-evaluation report. Again, the inspection team does not feel that the school has given itself sufficient credit for the high standards it achieves in this area.

144. Clear, effective, stimulating leadership is provided by the headteacher, who ensures that aims are purposefully pursued and largely achieved.

145. Management is characterised by a common sense of purpose and very good relationships. The acting deputy works closely with the headteacher in promoting values and standards, whilst the senior management team undertakes its role efficiently and effectively.

146. Curriculum development is one of the major strengths of the school. Subject co-ordinators work conscientiously to maintain good standards and to secure continuity and progression in learning. Very good communication takes place with senior managers through regular meetings, written reports and discussions.

147. Full account is taken of national priorities and of local agreements and partnerships. Work in this area has a positive effect not only on pupils' development but also on parents' understanding and involvement in their children's learning.

148. Regular self-evaluation and target-setting underpin the work of the school. Well-established procedures are in place for monitoring and evaluating standards of teaching and learning.

149. All members of staff undertake regular in-service training to update their skills and expertise. Performance management is well organised and benefits both individual teachers and classroom practice throughout the school.

150. The governing body undertakes its duties effectively and is well informed about all aspects of the life of the school, including the curriculum and standards of achievement in different subjects. Expenditure is very well monitored, assessed and controlled. Close liaison and a highly-successful partnership with the headteacher have led to very good strategic management and direction for the school.

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

Grade 1: good with outstanding features

151. The findings of the inspection team differ from the judgment of Grade 2 in the school's self-evaluation report. In the team's opinion, standards in this area are again higher than those assessed by the school.

152. Much hard work has been undertaken by the headteacher, staff and governors to develop a thorough, and largely accurate, self-evaluation process which recognises the strengths of the school and indicates aspects which require further improvement.

153. Evidence indicates that the school has been successful in its efforts to maintain standards since the last inspection and to build upon what was already a good report. New initiatives have helped to raise standards even further in some areas.

154. High standards are partly achieved through effective monitoring strategies, which include examination of teachers' planning, direct classroom observation and regular scrutiny of pupils' work.

155. Governors are kept properly informed of subject developments through regular reports and discussions with curriculum co-ordinators. A number of governors are able to visit classrooms to see teaching and learning for themselves.

156. Very good use is made of test results and other data to identify new targets for improvement. Senior managers are constantly seeking ways of further developing and extending pupils' achievements.

157. The school development plan is a sound working document which sets timescales for targets and indicates priorities and costs. Progress is reviewed on a regular basis.

158. Pupils themselves are aware of the importance of making constant improvements and, with the help of their teachers, evaluate their progress in a variety of ways.

159. Effective action has been taken to implement the recommendations in the last inspection report, particularly in respect of ensuring that lesson plans identify clear aims and objectives and that manageable procedures are in place for monitoring and evaluating standards of teaching and learning. No judgment can be given about present standards in individual subjects, as these were not required as part of the inspection.

160. The inspection team agreed with the school's judgments in four of the seven key questions. In the other three, grades were judged to be higher than those put forward by the school.

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

Grade 1: good with outstanding features

161. The findings of the inspection team match the judgment of Grade 1 in the school's self-evaluation report.

162. Good use is made of resources to ensure that the school has appropriate staffing for present pupil numbers. Teachers are effectively deployed, and are suitably qualified and experienced. Very good liaison takes place with nursery nurses and classroom assistants, all of whom make a valuable contribution to the overall quality of learning.

163. High priority is given to the continuing professional development of all members of staff. Training is well related to the specific needs of the school.

164. Performance-management and staff-appraisal systems are well established and function effectively.

165. Good support by the school secretary, caretaker, midday supervisors and canteen staff ensures that day-to-day management is smooth and efficient.

166. Effective use is made of all available accommodation, including corridor space. One of the two halls serves as a temporary school museum, whilst the other is regularly used for physical education, music and assemblies as well as a variety of after-school clubs and activities.

167. Buildings are well maintained overall. Adequate access is provided for pupils and visitors with physical disabilities. Two classes, including the nursery, are housed in well-decorated demountable classrooms.

168. Colourful, high-quality displays celebrate the interests and achievements of pupils and enhance the learning environment.

169. A large, well-kept playing field and appropriately marked-out hardcore areas enable pupils to participate in a range of sports and other activities.

170. All classes make full use of a wide range of good-quality learning resources, including a well-equipped computer suite and school library facilities.

171. Spending decisions are clearly linked to priorities and targets in the school development plan. Expenditure is closely monitored and reviewed.

172. The head teacher and school governors show considerable initiative in securing additional funding from a wide range of sources.

173. Overall, the school provides very good value for money.

School's response to the inspection

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of School	Pontarddulais Primary School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3 – 11 years
Address of school	Upper James Street Pontarddulais Swansea
Post code	SA4 8JD
Telephone Number	01792 882383

Headteacher	Mr. John Watkin Roberts
Date of appointment	1st January, 1997
Chairman of Governors	Mr. Gareth Williams
Registered Inspector	Mrs. Eirwen Griffiths, M. Phil., M.Ed.
Dates of inspection	14th – 17th March, 2005

Appendix B

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	21	45	42	51	42	52	39	45	337

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	12	4	14.9

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	24.5 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	10 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	-
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26.3
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.1 : 1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection		
Term	Reception	Rest of School
Autumn, 2004	86.41	91.94
Summer, 2004	90.00	92.23
Spring, 2004	86.87	91.04

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	30%
Number of pupils excluded during twelve months prior to inspection	0

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results
End of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS 1 Results 2004			Number of Pupils in Y2 42					
Percentage of Pupils at Each Level								
			D	W	1	2	3	4
ENGLISH:	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	10	82	8	0
		National	0	4	14	63	20	0
ENGLISH: Speaking and Listening	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	10	85	5	0
		National	0	3	12	63	22	0
English: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	10	49	41	0
		National	0	4	14	55	27	0
ENGLISH: Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	13	82	5	0
		National	0	5	14	69	11	0
MATHEMATICS	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	8	82	10	0
		National	0	2	11	63	24	0
SCIENCE	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	97	3	0
		National	0	2	10	66	22	0

Percentage of Pupils Attaining at least Level 2 in Mathematics, Science and English (or Welsh as a First Language) according to Teacher Assessment			
In the School:	90%	In Wales:	79%

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

National results relate to 2003, as figures for 2004 have not yet been published.

National Curriculum Assessment Results
End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2004									Number of pupils in Y6			52
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	4	4	11	62	19	0
		National	0	0	0	0	1	6	16	45	31	0
	Test/Task	School	0	2	0	0	4	4	0	32	58	0
		National	0	2	1	0	0	5	12	38	40	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	2	11	58	29	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	4	19	46	30	0
	Test/Task	School	0	2	0	0	0	2	4	48	44	0
		National	0	2	1	0	0	4	18	42	33	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	75	14	0
		National	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	49	35	0
	Test/Task	School	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	54	42	0
		National	0	2	0	0	0	1	9	48	39	0

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	81%	In the school	90%
In Wales	70%	In Wales	71%

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

National results relate to 2003, as figures for 2004 have not yet been published.

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

The inspection was carried out by a team of three inspectors over a period of four days.

- Pre-inspection meetings were held with the headteacher, staff and governing body.
- Thirteen parents attended a pre-inspection meeting with two members of the inspection team.
- Fifty-eight questionnaires were returned, analysed and summarised.
- All documentation submitted by the school was analysed and discussed, including the school development plan, policy and curriculum documents and teachers' planning files.
- Pupils were observed as they arrived and departed from school and during the midday and other breaks.
- At various times during the day, inspectors took the opportunity to talk to pupils and to discuss their work.
- Thirty-four lessons or parts of lessons were observed.
- Pupils were heard reading and were examined in their knowledge and understanding of English, mathematics, science and other subjects.
- A wide range of pupils' written and other work was examined in each class.
- Inspectors discussed pupils' work with class teachers and examined assessment records.
- Discussions were also held with the headteacher, curriculum co-ordinators and other staff.
- The work of pupils with special educational needs was examined.
- Minutes of meetings and documents relating to the financial management of the school were discussed.
- Budget figures were examined and discussed with the headteacher.
- Attendance and pupil records were inspected.
- Inspectors attended acts of collective worship.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mrs. Eirwen Griffiths Registered Inspector	Context Summary and recommendations Key Questions 4, 5 and 6
Mrs. A. Robertson Lay Inspector	Key Question 7 Contributions to key questions 1, 4 and 5
Mrs. A Newman Team Inspector	Key Questions 1, 2 and 3

Name and address of contractor

E.G.I.S.,
Brynheulog,
Brockweir,
Chepstow,
Gwent, NP16 7NQ.

Acknowledgment

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

PONTARDDULAIS PRIMARY SCHOOL
SWANSEA

INSPECTION

14th – 17th March, 2005

SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS

REGISTERED INSPECTOR:
MRS. EIRWEN GRIFFITHS
(WO50/17562)

Inspection under Section 10 of
School Inspections Act, 1996

18th April, 2005

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Pontarddulais Primary School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose 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 more information about their children's schools. 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.**

The inspection of Pontarddulais Primary School took place between 14th and 17th March, 2005. An independent team of three inspectors, led by Mrs. Eirwen Griffiths, M.Phil., M.Ed., 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.

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The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgments 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.

Summary

1. This is a very good school, with high standards of achievement, exemplary leadership and management, and many outstanding features in all areas of work, including personal relationships and pastoral care and guidance.

2. The inspection team agrees with the school's own judgments in four of the seven key questions and, in the other three, considers grades to be higher than those put forward by the school.

Table of grades awarded

3. Grades are currently judged to be the following:

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

4. This is an exceptional result indicating that the school is performing at a level well in excess of normal standards.

Standards

5. The overall quality of the educational provision for children under five is appropriate to their needs, and pupils make very good progress towards the desirable outcomes for learning.

6. Standards in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, number, and information and communications technology are very good overall, with particularly good standards at Key Stage 2.

7. Pupils at both key stages make very good progress in subjects across the curriculum. The school uses a wide range of analyses and data to set challenging targets and to monitor progress against appropriate benchmarks. Pupils are fully involved in assessing their own progress and are aware of what they need to do next in order to raise standards. They make very good progress towards their potential in

acquiring new knowledge, understanding and skills. Key skills are well applied across the curriculum.

8. Creative skills are very good in all areas. Pupils are imaginative and creative in their ideas, writing, composition, design and performance. There are some outstanding examples of creative work in subjects such as English, art, design and technology, and information and communications technology. Pupils perform enthusiastically on whole-school occasions, such as assemblies, concerts and eisteddfodau. They appraise and evaluate their performances in order to identify areas where further improvements can be made.

9. According to teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 last summer, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 or above was well above local and national averages in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science, despite a comparatively low level of attainment upon entry to the school. High levels were also attained in all three core subjects in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2.

10. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 show a continuing upward trend over the last four years. The core-subject indicator has been consistently above local and national figures, and the school achieves very well in comparison with similar schools.

11. Results at Key Stage 2 have also improved over the same period, with a large number of pupils achieving Level 4 or above. The core-subject indicator is well above the averages for the area and for Wales as a whole. When compared with similar schools in Wales, the school's performance is significantly better than the average. A significant number of pupils achieve the higher grade of Level 5.

12. No major differences occur between the performance of boys and girls.

13. Very good progress is made by pupils with special educational needs who respond well to the high quality of provision made by the school.

14. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is of a very high standard. All pupils understand what is expected of them and appreciate the consequences that inappropriate behaviour may entail both for themselves and others. The school exudes an orderly and caring ethos.

15. Average attendance in the three terms prior to the inspection was 92%. Unauthorised absence is minimal. Most pupils arrive punctually at the start of the school day.

The quality of education and training

16. Lessons observed during the inspection indicate that the quality of teaching is currently as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
44%	41%	15%	-	-

17. There were outstanding features in 44% of lessons and no significant shortcomings in 85% of classes. This greatly exceeds targets set by the Welsh Assembly Government.

18. No subjects were specifically identified for inspection but, in the lessons seen, good and very good teaching was one of the major strengths of the school. This has a very positive influence on pupils' learning, behaviour and attitudes. The quality of teaching contributes significantly to the very good standards achieved by most pupils.

19. Where teaching displays outstanding features, the pace of the lesson is brisk and purposeful, tasks are appropriately timed, and pupils are aware of their teachers' high expectations. Many teachers make very good use of praise to encourage and motivate pupils. The quality of questioning is well judged to test understanding and to encourage the development of oral skills. An air of purpose and engagement characterises many lessons, as pupils and teachers work closely together.

20. Assessment is one of the many strengths of the school and is consistently used to guide the planning of work and to identify areas requiring further development. Progress is regularly tracked and monitored.

21. Annual reports to parents are detailed and informative, explaining the criteria for success in subjects and providing helpful advice on how pupils can raise their standards.

22. The curriculum is broad, balanced, flexible and relevant, and fully meets statutory requirements. Experiences for children under five are based on the *Desirable Outcomes for Learning* and provide successfully for pupils at both nursery and reception level.

23. Strong emphasis is placed on continuity and progression in learning between year groups and key stages. Teachers have a very good overview of the breadth and depth of the curriculum, and have reviewed and revised all schemes of work to improve the quality of curriculum planning. Cross-curricular planning is another major strength of the school.

24. The school provides a very good range of extracurricular activities, including sport, instrumental music, art, mathematics, and information and communications technology. A significant number of pupils take advantage of these opportunities to extend their learning and broaden their interests. Pupils are encouraged to compete in local and national competitions, and there are many planned visits to places of interest, including galleries, theatres and museums.

25. Older pupils benefit from a variety of residential visits to places such as Margam Park, Llangrannog and Danycoed. These are valuable in promoting personal and social skills, particularly in placing an emphasis upon the ability to work together and to take responsibility for personal organisation.

26. Daily acts of collective worship are of high quality, with pupils participating enthusiastically through song and performance. Local ministers are regular and welcome visitors to assemblies, where pupils show a very good level of knowledge and understanding of the Christian tradition in their responses to questioning. A number of subjects make an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual development by providing opportunities to reflect on creative work, poetry, music and the natural world.

27. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong, and show respect for each other as well as for adults and the school environment and resources. Many are enthusiastic contributors to a variety of charities and take responsibility for organising events to raise money. They also take part in a variety of health and citizenship initiatives.

28. The school provides comprehensive and helpful information for parents, who are given many opportunities to participate in school life and discuss their children's progress in parents' evenings and open days. Parents' views are invited through questionnaires and meetings of an active parent-teacher association. The school organises popular workshops for parents through its Family Learning and Language and Play groups. Mathematics workshops encourage parents to share and support their children's learning in the subject.

29. Very good links have been established with the receiving comprehensive school and with the other primary schools in the area. These links ensure continuity in pupils' learning, especially through a successful project to track progress in key skills into Key Stage 3.

30. The heritage and culture of Wales are widely celebrated across the school, with prominent use of Welsh in displays and daily classroom routines. Considerable efforts are made to promote competent use of Welsh and to encourage bilingualism. The quality of work in this area is another outstanding feature of the school.

31. Pupils benefit from an effective system of care and support, which is well integrated into all aspects of the work of the school. Very good induction programmes, for example, enable nursery children to settle in to the school at their own time and pace.

32. High priority is given to pupils' safety and welfare. All members of staff receive regular training in first-aid and are well informed of the specific physical and medical needs of pupils. Clear procedures and policies are in place, and regular risk assessments are undertaken to ensure the continuing safety of the school environment. Child-protection procedures follow local recommendations. Good liaison takes place with external agencies.

33. Policies on sex education, bullying, equal opportunities, diversity and race discrimination reflect best practice and are subject to regular review. All pupils have equal access to school activities during the school day and in after-school clubs.

34. Pupils are carefully supervised at all times and are encouraged to show consideration and respect for each other through initiatives such as the Playground Friends scheme.

35. Attendance, absence and lateness are recorded in line with statutory requirements. Clear targets are in place to reduce levels of absence and improve punctuality. Attendance data is analysed on a weekly basis in order to identify trends and tackle unauthorised absence at an early stage.

36. Good partnerships with a variety of local businesses help to improve pupils' understanding of the workplace.

37. Procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs conform to the principles in the national Code of Practice. An efficient and conscientious co-ordinator ensures that meticulous records are kept of pupils' progress and that statutory requirements are fulfilled in relation to formal statements. Work undertaken in her withdrawal group is motivating and varied, and accords with targets identified in individual educational plans. Class teachers pay close attention to the special needs of individual pupils and ensure that tasks are differentiated appropriately. Strong emphasis is placed on the consolidation and progressive extension of skills and on full access to all areas of the curriculum. Very good support is provided by classroom assistants. Parents are kept properly informed and contribute to regular reviews of progress.

Leadership and management

38. Clear, effective, stimulating leadership is provided by the headteacher, who ensures that aims are purposefully pursued and largely achieved. Management is characterised by a common sense of purpose and very good relationships. The acting deputy works closely with the headteacher in promoting values and standards, whilst the senior management team undertakes its role efficiently and effectively.

39. Curriculum development is one of the major strengths of the school. Subject co-ordinators work conscientiously to maintain good standards and to secure continuity and progression in learning. Very good communication takes place with senior managers through regular meetings, written reports and discussions. Well-established procedures are in place for monitoring and evaluating standards of teaching and learning.

40. The governing body undertakes its duties effectively and is well informed about all aspects of the life of the school, including the curriculum and standards of achievement in different subjects. Expenditure is very well monitored, assessed and controlled. Close liaison and a highly-successful partnership with the headteacher have led to very good strategic management and direction for the school.

41. Much hard work has been undertaken by the headteacher, staff and governors to develop a thorough, and largely accurate, self-evaluation process which recognises the strengths of the school and indicates aspects which require further improvement. High standards are partly achieved through effective

monitoring strategies, which include examination of teachers' planning, direct classroom observation and regular scrutiny of pupils' work.

42. Governors are kept properly informed of subject developments through regular reports and discussions with curriculum co-ordinators. A number of governors are able to visit classrooms to see teaching and learning for themselves.

43. Very good use is made of test results and other data to identify new targets for improvement. Senior managers are constantly seeking ways of further developing and extending pupils' achievements.

44. The school development plan is a sound working document which sets timescales for targets and indicates priorities and costs. Progress is reviewed on a regular basis.

45. Effective action has been taken to implement the recommendations in the last inspection report, particularly in respect of ensuring that lesson plans identify clear aims and objectives and that manageable procedures are in place for monitoring and evaluating standards of teaching and learning. Progress has been very good overall.

46. Good use is made of resources to ensure that the school has appropriate staffing for present pupil numbers. Teachers are effectively deployed, and are suitably qualified and experienced. Very good liaison takes place with nursery nurses and classroom assistants, all of whom make a valuable contribution to the overall quality of learning.

47. High priority is given to the continuing professional development of all members of staff. Training is well related to the specific needs of the school.

48. Performance-management and staff-appraisal systems are well established and function effectively. Good support by the school secretary, caretaker, midday supervisors and canteen staff ensures that day-to-day management is smooth and efficient.

49. Effective use is made of all available accommodation, including corridor space. One of the two halls serves as a temporary school museum, whilst the other is regularly used for physical education, music and assemblies as well as a variety of after-school clubs and activities.

50. Buildings are well maintained overall. Adequate access is provided for pupils and visitors with physical disabilities. Two classes, including the nursery, are housed in well-decorated demountable classrooms. Colourful, high-quality displays throughout the school celebrate the interests and achievements of pupils and enhance the learning environment.

51. A large, well-kept playing field and appropriately marked-out hardcore areas enable pupils to participate in a range of sports and other activities.

52. All classes make full use of a wide range of good-quality learning resources, including a well-equipped computer suite and school library facilities. Spending decisions are clearly linked to priorities and targets in the school development plan. Expenditure is closely monitored and reviewed.

53. Overall, the school provides very good value for money.

Recommendations

It is recommended that action is taken to:

R1. maintain and, where possible, extend the very high quality of education provided for pupils;

R3. continue to develop the role of co-ordinators and provide further opportunities for them to observe classroom practice in their subjects.

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within forty-five 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.

Acknowledgment

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