

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Ton Pentre Junior School
Bailey Street
Ton Pentre
Rhondda Cynon Taff
CF41 7EL**

School Number: 674 2222

Date of Inspection: 15/01/07

by

**Michael T. Ridout
78730**

Date of Publication: 19/03/2007

Under Estyn contract number: 1116306

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Ton Pentre Junior 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 Ton Pentre Junior School took place between 15/01/07 and 17/01/07. 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 Ton Pentre School is a community junior for boys and girls aged from seven to eleven years. It is organised in five classes. There are 134 pupils on roll. The average class size is 27. There are six and a half full-time equivalent (fte) teachers, including the headteacher and one part-time member of staff. To enhance this provision there are two learning support assistants (LSA), one part-time and one full-time.
- 2 The school is situated in Ton Pentre, an established residential area, in the Rhondda Valley to the north-east of Porth. The area has a mixture of privately owned and rented homes. The school describes the community as mixed, with a few relatively advantaged and some disadvantaged households. Eighteen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals; this is below the local and the national average. There are few pupils from ethnic minorities. No pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language. English is the predominant tongue spoken and the school teaches Welsh as a second language.
- 3 Assessment data, including baseline assessments, confirm that the school receives pupils from the expected range of abilities. A minority has under-developed language skills; this is reflected in around 34 per cent of pupils being identified as having special educational needs (SEN). No pupil has a statement of SEN.
- 4 The school was previously inspected in March 2001. Since that time, the number on roll has declined significantly and both the number and organisation of classes has changed. There have been a number of staff changes and the proportion of pupils with SEN has increased from one in five in 2001 to one in three in 2006.
- 5 The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Investors in People accreditation.

The school's priorities and targets

- 6 The school's principal aim is to produce *rounded individuals* by placing emphasis on promoting both academic success and pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- 7 The main priorities in the school development plan (SDP) 2006–2007 are to:
 1. improve the performance of less-able pupils, mainly boys, in mathematics and English;
 2. ensure that end of key stage assessment procedures meet the latest statutory requirements;
 3. improve the provision and teaching of physical education and sport;
 4. develop the use of the new Primary SEN profile provided by the LEA;
 5. produce a transition plan to aid transition from KS1 to KS2 and KS2 to KS3.

Further areas for development, over the medium-term, include implementing the Healthy Schools, Eco Schools and Dyslexia Friendly Schools initiatives.

Summary

- 8 Ton Pentre Junior School plays a significant role within the community, provides good pastoral care for pupils and promotes their personal development well. However, there are some important shortcomings in standards.

Table of grades awarded

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

- 9 The inspection confirms the grade 2 awarded by the school in its self-evaluation for key question 4, but differs with the school's grading in the other key questions.
- 10 In accordance with the Education Act 2005, I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that this school is in need of significant improvement.

Standards

- 11 In twenty-five lessons, or parts of lessons, in the subjects inspected standards were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
-	20%	60%	20%	-

- 12 In one in five lessons observed, standards of achievement were good. This is well below the 2007 Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target of at least good standards in 65 per cent of lessons inspected.
- 13 The majority of learners achieve appropriate standards in English and mathematics. However, there is a lack of consistently good achievement in most of the other subjects inspected.
- 14 Standards in singing and reading are good.

15 Overall grades in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Subject	Grade
English	Grade 3
Welsh second language	Grade 4
Mathematics	Grade 3
Design and technology	Grade 4
Geography	Grade 4
Music	Grade 3

- 16 Pupils' competence in using key skills and in developing bilingual competence is under-developed.
- 17 In 2006, the end of KS2 National Curriculum (NC) results in science were in line with the national average and below the average for similar schools having over 16 per cent and up to 24 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals. In English and mathematics, the results were well below average figures, both nationally and for similar schools.
- 18 The school has been less successful over the last four years in meeting its end of key stage targets for pupils' attainment. In the NC results for English and mathematics, a negative trend is evident. This is partly explained by a greater proportion of pupils having special educational needs (SEN).
- 19 Analysis of the NC results, over the last three years, shows that the boys attain less well than girls and to a greater extent than is found nationally.
- 20 The overall rate of progress accelerates as pupils move through the school. Taken overall, learners make appropriate progress in basic skills although progress is much more variable in other subjects.
- 21 The more-able pupils are not always appropriately challenged to achieve their potential. Less-able pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress when working on well focused programmes. However, progress is not consistently maintained in whole-class lessons.
- 22 Standards of behaviour are generally good and pupils are well motivated.
- 23 Attendance figures average 93 per cent over the last three terms. This is broadly average compared with similar schools. Punctuality is generally good.
- 24 On occasions, older pupils demonstrate good capacity to work with appropriate independence. However, this aspect is not consistently developed. In general, pupils' study and collaborative skills are seldom fully developed.
- 25 Pupils show good development in their personal social and wider development. They show appropriate respect for diversity.

- 26 The School Council provides good opportunities to promote pupils' involvement and awareness of the school as a community. They are well prepared to take a full part in the wider community, but their awareness of the workplace is less well developed.

The quality of education and training

- 27 For a significant period, the school has experienced difficulties in maintaining continuity of teaching in some classes. At the time of the inspection, more than one fifth of the teaching staff was temporary.

- 28 The quality of teaching, in thirty lessons or parts of lessons, was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
-	14%	63%	23%	-

- 29 In approaching an eighth of the lessons observed, teaching was good. This is well below the national picture reported by HMCI in her annual report 2004 – 2005. Nationally, the quality of teaching is good in 79 per cent of lessons, with 18 per cent of lessons having outstanding features.
- 30 Teachers and support staff establish good working relationships with pupils. This is a strong feature of the school.
- 31 Teaching is successful in promoting pupils' skills in reading.
- 32 The impact of teaching is sometimes reduced by shortcomings in lesson planning and organisation that limit the pace of learning. Furthermore, a structured approach to the development of key skills, including oracy skills in English and Welsh, is lacking.
- 33 The school consistently implements a programme of standardised assessments. However, aspects of assessment, including the use of data to focus teaching, marking and involving pupils in improving their own learning, are under-developed.
- 34 The school provides pupils with equality of access to a generally broad curriculum. The provision to promote pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills is appropriate.
- 35 However, despite the provision of appropriate schemes of work the absence of clearly focused medium-term planning, particularly in the foundation subjects, sometimes results in a lack of coherence and progression in pupils' studies.
- 36 Good opportunities are provided for pupils to gain new learning experiences outside school. The provision to promote the performing arts is very well reflected in the high standards of performance evident in school productions and concerts.
- 37 The school promotes well pupils' personal and social development. The aspects of spiritual and cultural development are appropriately promoted. The moral and social aspects are well developed and are good features of provision.
- 38 The provision for the development of pupils' bilingual competence is inadequate.
- 39 The provision to promote education in sustainable development is at an early stage.

- 40 The quality of care, support and guidance, including the provision for pupils' personal and social education (PSE) is good. This is a particular strength of the school.
- 41 The school has an effective partnership with parents and friends of the school from the local community.
- 42 During the inspection, a number of potential health and safety issues were brought to the school's attention.
- 43 There are both strengths and some shortcomings in the provision for SEN. Learning programmes taught in small withdrawal groups are successful, but the attention given to the targets set in individual education programmes (IEPs) lacks consistency.
- 44 The governing body (GB) has implemented a disability access audit and drawn up an appropriate action plan to avoid putting disabled learners at a disadvantage.

Leadership and management

- 45 Leadership is successful in providing direction for the school's work through agreed values and aims. This is clearly reflected in the good quality of pastoral care provided and in the school's friendly and supportive ethos.
- 46 The school is committed to providing equal opportunities, but falls short in enabling some pupils to achieve their potential. Although it has identified the underachievement of pupils, mainly boys, in English and mathematics as an important issue, there is little evidence of a coherent strategy to improve provision.
- 47 Although the school sets annual targets in the school development plan (SDP), there is limited evidence of the success of these initiatives in recent years.
- 48 Management of the staff's professional development has been interrupted. This is partly due to absences of senior staff. Some of the key features of teaching the school had planned to implement are not evident in practice.
- 49 The GB is strongly supportive of the school. However, it has yet to formalise its monitoring role and does not meet fully its statutory obligations. In particular, end-of-year reports do not provide specific commentary about pupils' achievement and targets in all NC subjects.
- 50 Important details are also omitted from the governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus. Omissions include, the full details of end of key stage NC results, a summary of the targets set by governors for the coming three years and progress towards meeting the most recent targets, no report is made about school improvement strategies and no information is given about admissions policy or arrangements to take account of the needs of disabled pupils.
- 51 The role of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating standards is generally under-developed.
- 52 The annual SDP 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 action, including aspects of monitoring, to bring about improvement and provides very little detail of future strategies. This limits the effectiveness of planning for improvement.

- 53 On the basis of the key issues from the previous inspection in 2001 and recent development planning the extent of the school's improvement is limited.
- 54 The school is appropriately staffed and resourced. The basic deployment of staff and the organisation of classes is appropriate. However, resources such as the computer suite are not always fully utilised, the organisation of the school day into four lessons, mostly with one subject focus, and the organisation of teaching to cover class teacher's allotted preparation, planning and assessment time reduce efficiency and limit standards.
- 55 The assessment data available indicates value for money in terms of the resources deployed to improve standards in reading. The school maintains a high profile within the community, but the school's reduced NC results and its limited success in meeting end-of-key-stage targets currently reduces the extent to which the school provides value for money

Recommendations

- 56 In order to raise standards and improve further the quality of education provided the school should rigorously implement its school development plan (SDP) and place particular emphasis on:
- R1 raising standards, placing particular emphasis on the six subjects inspected;
 - R2 promoting achievement consistently in the use and deployment of key skills, including bilingual competence and independent research and study skills;
 - R3 improving progress in learning, especially for more-able pupils and the less-able pupils, including those with SEN, and promote the achievement of pupils, mainly boys, who currently underachieve;
 - R4 building on the teachers' expertise and recent professional training to ensure:
 - lessons have well focused learning objectives, employ a variety of teaching methods and have good pace;
 - lesson planning builds on day-to-day evaluations of pupils' progress in order to tailor tasks closely to pupils' differing needs and abilities;
 - R5 improving the use of assessment information to focus teaching;
 - R6 implementing the full range of work in schemes of work and ensure coherence and progression in pupils' studies;
 - R7 improving the effectiveness of planning for improvement and rigorously link monitoring and evaluation strategies to specific objectives;
 - R8 ensuring statutory requirements are met in the provision of information for parents and carers.

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 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

57 The findings of the inspection differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 2. The inspection identifies some good features in pupils' personal development and some shortcomings in the standards achieved.

58 In twenty-five lessons, or parts of lessons, in the subjects inspected, standards were judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
-	20%	60%	20%	-

59 In one in five lessons observed, standards of achievement were good. This is well below the 2007 Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target of at least good standards in 65 per cent of lessons inspected.

60 Overall grades in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Subject	Grade
English	Grade 3
Welsh second language	Grade 4
Mathematics	Grade 3
Design and technology	Grade 4
Geography	Grade 4
Music	Grade 3

61 Across the key stage, the majority of learners achieve appropriate standards in knowledge, understanding and skills in English and mathematics. However, there is a lack of depth of knowledge and consistently good achievement in most of the other subjects inspected.

62 The school has been less successful over recent years in enabling pupils to attain agreed learning targets and goals. By the end of KS2, although the majority attain in line with national expectations in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science the proportion has declined over the last four years.

63 Pupils' competence in using key skills and in developing bilingual competence is under-developed.

64 The school is proactive in tackling social disadvantage and pupils generally achieve similar levels of success regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background.

65 In 2006, the end of KS2 National Curriculum (NC) results in science, for pupils attaining level four and above, were in line with the national average and below the

average for similar schools having over 16 per cent and up to 24 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals. In English and mathematics the results were well below average figures, both nationally and for similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected level four in all three subjects was 74 per cent. This is below the average figures nationally and for similar schools.

- 66 Analysis of the school's results shows a negative trend over the last four years. The trend is flat in science with results remaining relatively strong. However, in English and mathematics a negative trend is clearly evident. The proportion of pupils attaining the level five is below national figures and fluctuates markedly, both between the two subjects and from year to year.
- 67 At the time of the last inspection, NC results on the basis of the core subject indicator in 2000 were above the national average. Since 2002 the proportion attaining levels below the expected standard has steadily increased in English and mathematics. This is partly explained by a greater proportion of pupils having SEN.
- 68 The school has identified the need to tackle under-achievement in English and mathematics in its SDP. Between 2004 and 2006 the difference in the attainment of boys compared with girls has increased quite markedly. Overall, the boys attain less well than girls and to a greater extent than is found nationally. The current picture reverses the trend up to 2003 when boys outperformed girls.
- 69 In two out of the last three years, the school did not meet its end-of-key-stage targets for attainment in English and mathematics.
- 70 Taken overall, learners make appropriate progress in basic skills although progress in skills development and the acquisition of knowledge and skills is much more variable in other subjects. The more-able pupils are not always appropriately challenged to achieve their potential.
- 71 Pupils with SEN sometimes make good progress towards the targets set for them in individual education plans, such as when working on well focused programmes in small groups. However, progress is not consistently maintained when working with their mainstream class.
- 72 In upper KS2, pupils have a sound understanding of their learning and they are developing greater knowledge of what they need to do to improve their work. However, in other classes this aspect is less well developed.
- 73 The overall rate of progress accelerates as pupils move through the school. However, the potential of pupils to achieve good standards, as shown in the school's assessment data, is not consistently reflected in the levels of achievement seen in much of their work over time.
- 74 Pupils are well prepared for moving on to the next stage of education in pastoral aspects, but a significant minority do not fulfil their academic potential.
- 75 Pupils show motivation and when lessons are well focused the majority concentrate well and work productively.

- 76 Standards of behaviour are generally good. The school is calm and well ordered. Pupils are friendly and have positive attitudes both to work and to one another. They show respect, understanding and sensitivity towards others. The 'Buddy System', in which older pupils are linked with younger pupils, is successful in promoting positive relationships.
- 77 Attendance figures average 93 per cent over the last three terms. This is broadly average compared with similar schools having over 16 per cent and up to 24 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals. Since 2001, levels of attendance have declined. Levels of unauthorised absence increase during the Summer Term. This is due to holidays taken in term time. Most pupils arrive punctually at the start of the school day. Late arrivals are duly recorded.
- 78 On occasions, older pupils demonstrate good capacity to collaborate with others and to work with appropriate independence. However, this aspect is not consistently developed across the school and in general, pupils' study skills and their ability to work with others is seldom fully developed.
- 79 They demonstrate appropriate awareness of equal opportunity issues and show appropriate respect for and an increasing understanding of the diversity of cultures within society.
- 80 Pupils learn about the importance of community values through the many opportunities the school provides for them to participate in the local community. The foundations of good citizenship are nurtured through The School Council, regular contacts with senior citizens who act as volunteers in the school, fund raising activities and opportunities for public performance.
- 81 The provision to promote pupils' awareness of the workplace is currently limited.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

82 The findings of the inspection differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 2. The inspection confirms some good features in teaching and assessment procedures, but also identifies shortcomings in lesson planning and the use of assessment.

83 For a significant period, the school has experienced difficulties in maintaining continuity of teaching in some classes. At the time of the inspection, more than one fifth of the teaching staff was temporary.

84 The quality of teaching, in thirty lessons or parts of lessons, was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
-	14%	63%	23%	-

85 In approaching an eighth of the lessons observed, teaching was good. This is well below the national picture reported by HMCI in her annual report 2004 – 2005. Nationally, the quality of teaching is good in 79 per cent of lessons, with 18 per cent of lessons having outstanding features.

86 Teachers and support staff establish good working relationships with pupils. This is a strong feature that contributes significantly to a positive ethos that promotes learning well.

87 Two LSAs make a positive contribution to teaching, especially in implementing support programmes in literacy and numeracy.

88 Where learning is well focused, teaching is successful in enabling pupils to achieve well. This was particularly evident in a few lessons where group tasks were well organised and the pupils were guided well in their studies.

89 Taken overall, teachers have appropriate subject knowledge. Individual strengths include music, but there is generally a lack of confidence in teaching the skills of ICT and developing both pupils' knowledge and skills in Welsh as a second language, geography and design and technology. Although teachers have attended appropriate training to update their practice, there was for example, little evidence of the consistent implementation of strategies to develop pupils' *critical skills*.

90 Appropriate subject frameworks guide the planning of lessons. The school has adopted a weekly format that provides opportunity to record detailed objectives in the core subjects and brief outline plans in the foundation subjects. Planning in the foundation subjects lacks sufficient detail. In literacy and numeracy, there is greater clarity in the learning objectives and, in a few lessons, these are explained clearly to pupils in terms that they understand.

- 91 First-hand evidence indicates that in the majority of lessons there is over-reliance on a brief explanation followed by similar tasks for all the pupils, often using a printed worksheet. This often led to a slow pace of work. In a minority of lessons, teachers developed explanations, made good use of questioning and returned to the learning objective in the plenary session in order to reinforce new learning. However, in most lessons the learning objectives were seldom developed fully in relation to pupils' needs and abilities.
- 92 Scrutiny of teachers' planning over time, together with the first-hand evidence from lessons, confirms a general lack of appropriately focused evaluations that build on key learning objectives in order to plan the next steps in learning for different groups of pupils in the class. Although teachers regularly monitor and review pupils' progress, both formally and informally, there is little evidence to indicate how this information is used to adapt lesson planning.
- 93 Teaching promotes equality of opportunity and access well in so far as all pupils are included in the full range of learning experiences provided. However, the tailoring of tasks to match the differing needs and abilities of pupils is not well developed in most classes. As a consequence, the more-able pupils in particular, are seldom enabled to achieve their potential.
- 94 The school is successful in developing pupils' reading skills in English, but a structured approach in promoting oracy and writing skills across the curriculum has yet to be developed. A specialist teacher teaches Welsh as a second language to the older pupils once a week, but teaching across the school does not consistently promote bilingual skills.
- 95 The school consistently implements a programme of standardised assessments in English and mathematics and end-of-unit tests in science. These procedures yield much useful data. In English and mathematics, the data is analysed and used well in helping the school to set realistic end of year targets. Furthermore, in English and mathematics, individual attainment is recorded using assessment grids linked to the NC. However, there is little evidence, other than in the provision for less-able readers, to show how assessment information is used to focus teaching in order to promote improvements in the achievement of particular groups of pupils.
- 96 In English, samples of pupils' work are collated to exemplify individual pupils' progress in writing. However, the value of this procedure is reduced as the work is not consistently assessed using NC criteria. The picture is similar in mathematics and science, but in other subjects assessment procedures are undeveloped.
- 97 As follow up to recent training, the school has begun to implement individual pupil targets in English and mathematics. These arrangements have good potential, but they have yet to impact fully on day-to-day lessons and although older pupils are aware of their target sheets there is little evidence of teaching building on these targets to help pupils understand how they can improve their own progress.
- 98 Although the school has policies on marking and the presentation of pupils' work these are not consistently implemented and their effectiveness is inconsistent.

- 99 The school complies with the statutory requirements for end-of-key-stage teacher assessment, but fails to comply fully with the requirements relating to the publication of results and reporting fully on pupils' progress in end-of-year written reports to parents.

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

- 100 The findings of the inspection differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 2. The inspection confirms some good features of provision that enrich pupils' learning experiences and promote their personal development, but also identifies shortcomings in assuring appropriate breadth and progression in learning in order to meet fully the needs of all pupils.
- 101 The school provides pupils with equality of access to a generally broad curriculum that meets the statutory requirements of the NC and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. It responds appropriately to pupils' learning needs and interests.
- 102 There are appropriate curriculum policies and schemes of work in all the required subjects and areas. These provide a sound basis to ensure coherence and progression in learning, but the absence of clearly focused medium-term planning to guide provision, particularly in the foundation subjects, sometimes results in a lack of depth in pupils' studies. This is most evident in Welsh as a second language, design and technology and geography.
- 103 The provision to promote pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills is appropriate. This is most effective in the teaching of reading. However, the provision to promote basic and key skills across the curriculum lacks rigour. There is no formalised whole-school approach. The identification of opportunities to promote key skills does not permeate subject planning and even though key skills are highlighted in short-term planning there is an absence of detail.
- 104 The school continues to offer good opportunities for pupils to gain new learning experiences outside school. Pupils benefit greatly and are positively encouraged to participate in after-school sports tournaments, a drama club and a very successful choir. The provision to promote the performing arts is well reflected in the high standards of performance evident in school productions and concerts. On occasions, pupils perform for the community, such as in a local home for the elderly or with other local organisations. For instance, pupils have performed with a local singer and their performance was professionally recorded.
- 105 Visits to the local community, and beyond, to places of educational interest, such as St Fagans, Llancaiach Fawr, Caerleon, Senedd and Glyn Cornel environmental centre add a valuable dimension to pupils' learning experiences. Furthermore, a good number of pupils benefit from instrumental tuition.

- 106 Individuals from the local community, including the local Member of Parliament and Assembly Member, have visited the school to speak to pupils about their experiences and local ministers visit the school on a regular basis to take part in assemblies. Such visitors enhance people's learning well.
- 107 The school promotes well pupils' personal and social development. The arrangements for collective worship meet statutory requirements and contribute appropriately to pupils' spiritual development. Opportunities are given for quiet reflection and the good standard of singing enhances daily assemblies. Teachers provide good role models for pupils' moral and social development; as a result pupils acquire positive values and know right from wrong. They demonstrate sensitivity to the needs of those less fortunate than themselves and regularly raise money for charities, for example Noah's Ark Appeal, Ty Hafan, NSPCC and Macmillan nurses. Pupils' cultural awareness is appropriately addressed through subjects such as geography and music. Furthermore, the school's well established cultural links with three European countries, involving the school choir, helps to foster a greater understanding of the diversity of cultures.
- 108 The school benefits from effective and well established partnerships with Ton Infants School, from where most pupils transfer at the end of Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Treorchy Comprehensive School where almost all the pupils transfer to at the end of KS2. Transition arrangements are comprehensive and effective. There are also well established links with an initial teacher training institution. Students undertaking a range of training courses attend the school on placements and also former pupils often return on work experience. These partnerships are mutually beneficial.
- 109 The school makes limited provision to raise pupils' awareness of the workplace and a range of jobs. Opportunities to enhance learning through planned links with business are under developed.
- 110 The provision for the development of pupils' bilingual competence is inadequate. The development of pupils' oracy skills in both English and Welsh is insufficiently structured and as a consequence provision is inconsistent. The use of incidental Welsh is not well established. Furthermore, opportunities provided in schemes of work to promote pupils' awareness of the heritage and culture of Wales are seldom fully exploited. Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is suitably promoted through the annual celebration of St David's Day, the school's strong musical tradition and when investigating the work of Elwyn Thomas, a local artist.
- 111 The school is proactive in combating social disadvantage and stereotyping and presents pupils with equality of access across the full range of its provision. However, the school is less effective in promoting equal opportunity for pupils of different abilities to achieve their potential.
- 112 The provision to promote education in sustainable development is at an early stage. The need to develop this aspect is noted as a likely area for future development in the SDP. Planning to embed this aspect within the curriculum has yet to be formalised. Currently, pupils' awareness of sustainable development is promoted through the recycling of paper.

- 113 Pupils have limited opportunities to develop entrepreneurial skills. Despite the provision of the Healthy Eating Tuck Shop, initiated by the School Council and run by older pupils, the good opportunities this initiative provides to promote entrepreneurial skills have yet to be exploited. Furthermore, mini-enterprise activities linked to subjects such as design and technology are not yet implemented.
- 114 The school is mindful of national priorities to promote life-long learning skills and community regeneration. Although at an early stage, it is developing plans through its links with the Groundwork Trust and Forestry Commission to provide opportunities for pupils to be involved in a regeneration scheme at Bwylfa Farm and to learn about environmental issues.

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

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings
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- 115 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 116 The quality of care, support and guidance is good. The staff are sensitive to pupils' needs and support programmes are suitably integrated into the school's work. Pupils are praised and rewarded for good work and effort and for adhering to school rules. Parents find the school supportive and accommodating with a caring atmosphere.
- 117 Good links have been established with outside agencies. For example, good liaison between staff at the Tai centre helps to ensure effective guidance and provision to meet the needs of individual pupils. In particular, staff from the Behaviour Support Service work successfully with the school to counter pupils' emotional difficulties and build up their confidence and self-esteem. There is also good provision, in the case of children *looked after* by the local authority, to promote liaison with social services and foster parents and promote continuity in the child's education.
- 118 The school has an effective partnership with parents and friends of the school from the local community. They play an active role in fundraising by organising fairs, concerts and social events. The funds raised contribute to the improvement of resources, such as the provision of an interactive whiteboard. Several regular volunteers contribute significantly to school life, such as by listening to pupils read, assisting with practical tasks and in one case running a very popular after-school drama club.
- 119 The school has implemented a formal Home-School Agreement in line with WAG regulations. It has sought the views of parents through a questionnaire and responded by clarifying a number of issues raised. The pre-inspection meeting and questionnaire indicated the majority of parents are generally supportive of the school and hold the organisation in high regard. However, a number continue to express concern about the provision of information and the lack of consistency in the setting of homework.

- 120 Parents are generally informed about the life and work of the school through regular newsletters, parental consultation evenings and an end of year written report about their child's progress. Aspects of the school's communication with parents are not fully effective and do not comply with statutory requirements. In particular, some important details are not included in the governors' annual report to parents, the school prospectus and end-of-year pupil reports.
- 121 The school's induction procedures are good and include a *welcome pack* for new parents. When Year 2 pupils make a pre-school visit, the buddy system ensures that Year 5 pupils are assigned to look after their needs when they arrive in September. Some Year 3 pupils and a teacher also visit the Infant school prior to the pupils' arrival at Ton Pentre. Discussions with older pupils confirm the success of the buddy system in promoting good relationships and an ethos of mutual support. The induction arrangements to the local secondary school are also well established.
- 122 The overall quality of the planned provision for personal and social education (PSE) is good. A variety of teaching experiences, including the use of *Circle Time* in some instances, is interwoven through many aspects of school life and helps pupils to develop their personal qualities and promotes positive values. The provision for pupils in Year 6 includes participation in a course: Safety Awareness For Everyone (SAFE). Teachers and the police work together to highlight the danger of substance misuse, the importance of healthy bodies and appropriate behaviour in all situations including awareness of personal safety. The PSE programme includes sex education in line with the school's policy and health professionals contribute appropriate expertise to particular aspects of pupils' learning.
- 123 Healthy lifestyles are promoted, such as through the provision of healthy meal choices and a fruit tuck shop. The school has plans to implement a breakfast club and takes account of pupils' views through the School Council. Pupils' suggestions include implementing ideas such as anti-bullying strategies, the provision of water coolers and the fruit tuck shop.
- 124 The School Council provides good opportunities to promote pupils' involvement and awareness of the school as a community. They are encouraged to take account of the needs of others when making choices and decisions and to learn about the concept of citizenship and the democratic process. This aspect is reinforced for older pupils through visiting the Senedd in Cardiff Bay.
- 125 Attendance and punctuality are systematically monitored. There have been no exclusions during the last twelve months. The secretary collates attendance information enters data into a computer system and follows up any unexplained absence. The school receives regular support in monitoring patterns of attendance and punctuality by the Education Welfare Officer. Appropriate action is taken when necessary. The school rewards one hundred percent attendance and sets an annual target to improve attendance although this is not reported to parents.
- 126 Pupils' behaviour and performance are appropriately monitored. Good achievement, good effort, good behaviour and kindness to others are recognised and rewarded.
- 127 Appropriate risk assessment procedures to help ensure a healthy and safe

environment, both in school and during educational visits or activities, are documented. Two members of staff have received training in First Aid in the workplace. Supervision, care and welfare procedures for pupils are sound overall although, as at the time of the last inspection, inspectors raised a number of shortcomings in the school's procedures with the headteacher. The governing body (GB) will be asked to consider these issues.

- 128 The school has effective procedures to ensure the protection of children. Governors have adopted the policy and procedures recommended by the Local Education Authority (LEA). The headteacher, Chairman of Governors and one member of staff have received appropriate training in this area. The headteacher ensures that all members of staff are made aware of their responsibilities in this area and reminds them of the procedures to be followed in the event of a concern being identified.
- 129 There are both strengths and some shortcomings in the provision for SEN. Early identification of learning needs in literacy is systematic and effective. The provision of the *Catch-up* programme in reading is well established and the school is introducing the *Spotlight* programme in numeracy. The provision of these programmes, often in withdrawal groups led by an LSA, has a beneficial effect on pupils' achievements.
- 130 Observation and discussion, together with consideration of assessment information, between the class teacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) lead to additional support from the class teacher and an LSA where available. Appropriate Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are developed for pupils receiving additional support at the school action or school action plus stages of the SEN Code of Practice. Pupils at the school action plus stage benefit from advice from external specialist services to guide the provision made and additional support is provided where this is judged relevant to the pupils' needs. However, although IEPs indicate the need for tasks matched to pupils' particular needs, the learning objectives and targets identified are not consistently developed in many whole-class lessons. Furthermore, although pupils receive targets, these are not addressed sufficiently to ensure continuity and progress.
- 131 The progress of pupils with SEN is regularly monitored and review meetings, involving pupils, parents and appropriate professionals take place at least twice a year.
- 132 The support provided for learners whose behaviour impedes their progress and that of others is generally effective. In a few cases, the school works closely with external agencies in the implementation of appropriate individual behaviour plans.
- 133 The school supports and guides pupils well, taking appropriate account of their social and educational background. The school is proactive in broadening pupils' horizons through a wide range of learning experiences.
- 134 Teachers promote gender equality and question stereotypes in choices and expectations such as through the PSE programme. They are aware of differences in the performance of boys and girls and are improving provision to enhance the achievement of boys in particular,

- 135 There are effective policies to promote equal opportunities, promote race equality, minimise all forms of harassment including bullying and eliminate oppressive behaviour. The school is proactive in resolving any problems relating to unacceptable behaviour.
- 136 There are currently no physically disabled pupils attending the school. The GB has implemented a disability access audit and drawn up an appropriate action plan to avoid putting disabled learners at a disadvantage. However, details of this plan are not published for the benefit of parents. This is a statutory requirement.
- 137 Pupils are positively encouraged to recognise and respect diversity. This begins with recognition of individual differences at school; is broadened to include communities within Wales and also finding out about societies in different parts of the world. For example, a visitor representing the Open Door Ministry in Africa recently attended an assembly, and in geography and religious education pupils learn about different cultures and religions.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

- 138 The findings of the inspection differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 2. The inspection recognises the school's success in promoting high standards in some aspects of the performing arts and the good contribution this makes to pupils' personal development. However, there are shortcomings in academic standards and the school does not provide parents and carers with the full range of information required by the WAG.
- 139 Leadership is successful in providing direction for the school's work through agreed values and aims. This is clearly reflected in the good quality of pastoral care provided and in the school's friendly and supportive ethos. However, despite the provision of whole-school objectives annually there is limited evidence to demonstrate a shared understanding of actions outcomes and the details of how the current goals are to be realised.
- 140 The agreed mission statement and aims for the school's work place equal emphasis on developing pupils' academic and personal development. There is strong commitment to ensuring equality for all. For instance, the school is mindful of pupils' differing capabilities and has identified the underachievement of some pupils, mainly boys, as an important issue. However, although new resources are being purchased and staff training undertaken the strategies needed to promote equality of opportunity and access for all groups of pupils are not yet consistently implemented.
- 141 The school takes appropriate account of national and local priorities. The focus of the current SDP includes targets to improve the performance of less-able pupils and develop a transition plan in collaboration with partner schools.
- 142 Although the school sets whole-school targets in an annual SDP there is only limited evidence to demonstrate the consistent success of these initiatives in recent years.
- 143 Furthermore, although the school's end-of-key-stage targets for attainment take appropriate account of the increased proportion of pupils with SEN in the school, it has not been fully successful in meeting these realistic targets.
- 144 The arrangements for performance management are in line with requirements. However, the process has been delayed this academic year owing to staff absence. Similarly the effective management of the staff's professional development has been interrupted and as a consequence some of the key features of teaching the school planned to implement are not yet securely embedded in the culture of the school.
- 145 The GB is strongly supportive of the school and has high regard for the school's well established profile within the local community. Governors receive appropriate information from the headteacher and the LEA and this enables them to help the school in setting its strategic direction through the annual SDP process.

- 146 The GB systematically monitors income and expenditure and receives appropriate information about standards from the staff. Although some governors informally monitor the school's work through visits, the GB has yet to formalise its monitoring role within the school's planning and evaluation processes.
- 147 The school's provision of information for parents and carers does not comply fully with statutory requirements. In particular, pupils' end-of-year reports do not provide specific commentary of achievement and targets in all subjects of the NC.
- 148 A number of important details are also omitted from the governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus. Omissions include the full details of end-of-key-stage results including comparative data, a summary of the targets set by governors for the coming three years and progress towards meeting the most recent targets and no report is made about school improvement strategies in line with the school's action plan. There is appropriate reference to SEN policy, but there is no information about admissions policy or arrangements to take account of the needs of disabled pupils.

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

Grade 4: some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

- 149 The findings of the inspection differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 2. This is because inspectors identified important shortcomings in the effectiveness of planning for improvement
- 150 The school's self-evaluation report provides a wide-ranging narrative review of the school's work. The inspection confirms the grade 2 awarded by the school in key question 4, but differs with the school's grading in the other six 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 participation in training opportunities, such as working with the staff from partner schools to moderate teacher assessments, most subject leaders have collated only limited evidence to exemplify standards and quality in subject provision.
- 152 The school draws on a number of frameworks to put in place elements of a self-evaluation strategy. Regular discussion in staff meetings is supported by arrangements for subject monitoring, including, lesson observations, and subject leaders complete brief evaluations of their subjects on an annual basis. However, there is very little evidence to show that these arrangements are rigorously linked to first-hand evidence or the SDP.
- 153 The school has implemented a parental questionnaire and informally takes account of the views of governors. The school also listens to the views of pupils, such as through the school council. The school responds appropriately to the views

expressed and has clarified some of its procedures for parents and has improved some aspects of provision for the pupils.

- 154 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.
- 155 The annual SDP 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.
- 156 The SDP includes success criteria and in some instances specifies the appropriate allocation of resources.
- 157 Based on the evidence of development planning over the last three years, there is only limited information to show that actions taken have resulted in measurable improvements. The best example is the added value shown in the good progress most pupils make in reading. However, the first-hand evidence of the inspection is not consistent with the school's judgement for example, that the implementation of a *three-part lesson format* is well established and that teaching consistently promotes the development of key skills.
- 158 On the basis of the key issues raised by the previous inspection in 2001, the extent of the school's improvement since that time is limited. The recommendations of this inspection point to the need for improvement in much the same areas as well as the need to raise standards.

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings
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- 159 The findings of the inspection differ from the school's self-evaluation in that the school graded this key question grade 2. The inspection identifies several shortcomings in the efficient use of some key resources.
- 160 There are enough appropriately qualified and experienced teachers to provide for the full range of curricular requirements across the key stage. However, as a result of periods of long-term illness and the resignation of a long-serving member of staff the school has found it difficult to maintain continuity of teaching in some areas.
- 161 In general, teachers and LSA are appropriately deployed. There is a basic sufficiency in the provision of LSAs. These assistants provide good support to pupils, particularly in withdrawal groups, and they attend training to help them develop their skills in supporting the pupils' learning.
- 162 In collaboration with the local comprehensive school, the school benefits from provision of a specialist teacher to provide weekly lessons in Welsh as a second language for pupils in Y5 and Y6.

- 163 The school secretary and other ancillary staff make a valuable contribution to the life and work of the school.
- 164 The school is reasonably well resourced. In general, teaching and support staff ensure that pupils have access to resources appropriate to their needs. A computer suite has been established to enhance learning although pupils have limited access to computers in most lessons. A room is set aside for music, each classroom has a small fiction library, there is a reference library in the foyer and the organisation of reading scheme books is clear. However, pupils have limited opportunity to develop library, research and independent study skills.
- 165 The accommodation provides a suitable setting for good teaching, learning and support for all learners. It is generally well maintained and with a high standard of cleanliness. The school is unable to fund an internal redecoration programme. Displays of pupils' work suitably enhance the school environment. There is no grassed area, but the school has access to a nearby sports field.
- 166 The building currently provides limited access for pupils with physical disabilities.
- 167 The school is used by outside organisations; this generates fees and helps to cement good community relationships.
- 168 Taken overall the basic deployment of staff and the organisation of classes is appropriate. However, key resources such as the computer suite are not always fully utilised. Furthermore, the organisation of the school day into four lengthy lessons, mostly with one subject focus, and the organisation of teaching to cover the classteacher's planning, preparation, and assessment time (PPA) outside of class both reduce efficiency. This is evident in a slow pace to learning and the fragmented learning experiences pupils' sometimes experience.
- 169 Although members of staff attend appropriate training courses there is limited evidence of the focused management or impact of this provision, such as through clear links to whole-school goals and evaluations and the consistency of practice across the school.
- 170 The school is in a deficit budget situation and is in the second year of a five-year plan agreed with the LEA to resolve this situation. As a consequence, limited funding is available to provide for the school's priorities in the SDP. This plan includes some details of spending plans and although subject spending allocations are agreed each year these are not clearly linked to the SDP.
- 171 Subject leaders regularly review the provision of resources in the subjects for which they are responsible. A recent example is the purchase of texts to suit the interests of boys. The GB systematically reviews income and expenditure and ensures value for money in the purchases made by the school. The assessment data available indicates value for money in terms of the resources deployed to improve standards in reading. The school maintains a high profile within the community, but the school's reduced NC results and its limited success in meeting end-of-key-stage targets currently reduces the extent to which the school provides value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

English

Key Stage 2: Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

- 172 Across the school pupils extend their vocabulary satisfactorily and gain greater confidence in speaking and listening. Many older pupils enjoy speaking, especially to adults, and do so with confidence.
- 173 Pupils steadily develop the skills of speaking in a variety of contexts, such as recalling their learning, presenting ideas to the class, answering questions and through discussion. More-able pupils express themselves competently when discussing their work. Pupils also benefit from opportunities to perform, such as through music and drama, and on occasions role-play.
- 174 The majority of pupils listen attentively for short periods, such as listening to a poem or an extract from a story. Older pupils show good skills in listening when working with a partner or in a small group
- 175 Standards in reading are good overall. Pupils steadily improve their skills across the school. They gain confidence in reading a suitable range of texts and learn about spelling patterns and punctuation, as well as identifying the features of books and distinguishing between fiction and non-fiction.
- 176 Older 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 are beginning to express preferences, including naming authors and genre.
- 177 Pupils with under-developed reading skills make good progress. They are well supported through targeted provision in small groups. This has a positive impact. Furthermore, pupils across the school benefit from regular opportunities to read with adult volunteers.
- 178 Writing skills are satisfactorily developed across the school. In lower KS2, pupils select and write information from a non-fiction text about badgers in different formats and when investigating characters from a folk tale, *The Giant of Gifach Fargoed*, some write in simple sentences.
- 179 In mid KS2, pupils develop their knowledge of myths and legends. They have good recall of *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. Pupils confidently identify elements of the plot and setting and describe the main characters.
- 180 In upper KS2, pupils improve spelling and dictionary skills well. They have a developing knowledge of word structures and grammar. They identify prefixes, suffixes, verbs and adverbs for instance. The older pupils know how to set out play

scripts, organise paragraphs and record direct speech. They increasingly distinguish between different genres.

- 181 The scrutiny of previous work reveals pupils explore grammar spelling and sentence structure, and improve steadily their comprehension skills through exercises linked to stories by Roald Dahl. Older pupils have produced some well structured and presented pieces of writing, including autobiographies and reports.

Shortcomings

- 182 A significant minority of younger pupils has yet to develop the skills of active listening. This also impedes the range of vocabulary used in speaking.
- 183 Pupils make insufficient use of reading skills and a wide range of texts to enhance their comprehension skills and both locate and interpret information.
- 184 Pupils seldom develop fully their skills in writing, such as making notes, drafting extended pieces of writing in a range of styles and by improving the quality of language such as through editing with a partner.

Welsh second language

Key Stage 2: Grade 4: some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

Good features

- 185 In lower KS2, pupils respond appropriately to simple instructions in Welsh and they know how to exchange greetings. They have good recall of previously learnt patterns such as *Ble rwyd ti'n byw?* and *Pwy syn byw yn ___ ?*
- 186 They identify patterns and vocabulary relating to the weather including, *mae hi'n stormus* and know the days of the week. They also use new vocabulary relating to food, for example *Dw i eisiau hufen ia.*
- 187 Older pupils in KS2 know the months of the year in Welsh and use them correctly to explain which month they have their birthdays and how old they are. Pupils practise the patterns *Pryd mae dy benblwydd di?* and *Mae fy mhenblwydd i ym mis ___* appropriately. They join in confidently in role-play and respond appropriately, with good pronunciation.
- 188 Pupils are well motivated, display enjoyment when learning and make good progress in speaking and reading. On occasions, pupils make effective use of the interactive whiteboard to extend their reading skills in the language.

Shortcomings

- 189 Pupils' speaking and listening skills are not fully developed as they make only limited use of Welsh within the daily life and routines of the school.

- 190 Insufficient opportunities are given to pupils to build upon, reinforce and extend their understanding and confident use of the everyday language patterns taught.
- 191 Pupils do not develop sufficient confidence in using a wide range of vocabulary as they progress through the key stage. The older pupils have limited competence when invited to engage in an extended conversation.
- 192 Pupils' skills in writing are under-developed.

Mathematics

Key Stage 2: Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

- 193 In lower KS2, more-able pupils have a good understanding of odd and even numbers, consecutive numbers and place value.
- 194 They are developing mathematical thinking skills well, such as when using number fans to identify the number that falls between two, two-digit numbers. They count on in steps of 25 and 50 and add ten to three digit numbers with increasing accuracy. The pupils develop the skills of multiplication well and are beginning to understand the use of adding and subtracting strategies to solve problems, including those involving money and measures.
- 195 Less-able pupils have a good knowledge of place value to at least hundreds and they make effective use of number grids displayed on the computer screen to assist them in calculating in tens for example.
- 196 In Y5, less-able pupils are generally confident in naming two-dimensional shapes and pupils in Y4 are developing a sound understanding of symmetry.
- 197 Older pupils in Y5 and Y6 understand and use a variety of strategies for doubling and halving numbers and making calculations using the four rules. They are developing a clear understanding of negative numbers on a number line and on a temperature scale.
- 198 More-able pupils recognise polygons and understand reflective and rotational symmetry. They distinguish between acute and obtuse angles and accurately name the properties of different triangles.
- 199 In Y6, pupils successfully apply their knowledge of multiplication to calculate area and understand that area is measured in squared units. More-able pupils use a range of methods to multiply large numbers by two digits. Their knowledge of proper and improper fractions is developing well.
- 200 By the end of KS2, more-able pupils use appropriate mathematical vocabulary, recall mathematical facts accurately and with speed and begin to apply their knowledge to solve mathematical questions in unfamiliar contexts.

Shortcomings

- 201 Many pupils' ability to calculate, approximate and solve problems mentally is under-developed. Most use a limited range of strategies to solve number problems mentally and lack confidence in explaining their methods of calculation and recognising alternative strategies.
- 202 In lower and mid KS2, less-able pupils have a limited knowledge and understanding of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and concepts such as symmetry. A significant proportion of boys underachieve.
- 203 Pupils' skills in data handling and representing mathematical information in different forms, including graphs and tables, are under-developed.
- 204 Many older pupils' have an insecure understanding of equivalent values between fractions, decimals and percentages.

Design and technology

Key Stage 2: Grade 4: some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

Good features

- 205 In lower KS2, pupils examine different picture frames and describe how they work; they identify the materials used and show a developing understanding of how a frame is constructed.
- 206 Pupils in mid KS2, investigate a variety of musical instruments. They identify the materials used and some begin to understand how the instrument works.
- 207 Discussion with older pupils, photographs of previous work and displays of pupils' products indicate the range of work undertaken. Pupils in the lower school design sandwiches, investigate packaging and produce designs for labels using ICT. A desk tidy and model shoes exemplify neat products.
- 208 Older pupils recount making musical instruments and cards with moving parts. The products displayed are well finished. They describe the attachment of wheels and axles to models such as a land yacht and know that levers, gears and cams are used to control movements.
- 209 Pupils in Y6 describe the simple jointing techniques used in making model shelters and based on a challenge to build a tower out of newspaper, they describe various methods of strengthening a paper structure such as layering and folding. They also recall using construction kits to make structures such as fairground rides.

Shortcomings

- 210 Pupils' knowledge of the designing and making process and its links to entrepreneurial activities is undeveloped. They seldom record their design ideas in sufficient detail or set out the specification and instructions for making a product.

- 211 Pupils do not progressively develop skills in investigating, designing, planning, making and evaluating the artefacts they make.
- 212 Pupils' knowledge of materials, structures and jointing techniques, and their skills in using simple tools are limited.
- 213 Pupils' competence in using control technology is undeveloped.

Geography

Key Stage 2: Grade 4: some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

Good features

- 214 In Year 3, when using maps of the local area, pupils identify physical and human features and more-able pupils compare the photographs to identify the time of day and year they were taken.
- 215 In Years 4 and 5, with the benefit of a range of evidence including, written sources and video, pupils develop appropriate knowledge of the features and stages along the course of a river. They identify key points along the River Severn's journey to the sea, on a map, and relate these features to the geography of Wales. When describing the main features of a river pupils use appropriate geographical vocabulary.
- 216 In discussion, pupils enthusiastically recall a recent informative field study they undertook of the River Rhondda at certain spots along its course. They observed different stages of the river and found out about physical processes such as deposition and erosion that shape the river's course. Pupils undertook measurements of the depth and width of the river, and the air and water temperature at different points.
- 217 More-able pupils in Year 5 are beginning to use geographical terms such as erosion and tributary accurately and they demonstrate an increasing understanding of physical processes such as the formation of a waterfall.
- 218 In Year 6, pupils are developing an appropriate understanding of both the human and physical features that shape lifestyles in India. Using photographs of different homes, for example, they identify the features of design that explain the differences between the homes of rich and poor families
- 219 Previous work indicates pupils in Year 6 identify similarities and differences, and make simple comparisons, between their lives and the life of a child in India. They name and locate the continents and discover interesting facts about Wales and India.
- 220 Photographic evidence indicates pupils have had good opportunities to develop a sound understanding of the location, features and character of their area. Through studying the *Ton Trail*, they have learnt about geographical patterns and the effect of

land use and pollution. For instance, pupils have studied houses and traffic and studied physical and human features in the locality.

Shortcomings

- 221 Pupils' map work skills are under-developed. They have a limited knowledge of the geographical features and the names of the principal regions of Wales.
- 222 Pupils do not sufficiently develop the skills of geographical enquiry and seldom develop their studies in sufficient depth to enable them to make comparisons and draw conclusions.
- 223 Pupils seldom enhance their learning through presenting geographical information in a variety of forms including extended writing, tables and graphs, illustrations and the use of ICT.
- 224 Pupils have limited knowledge of a contrasting locality in Wales and of different countries in the European Union and further afield.
- 225 Pupils' understanding of global citizenship and the interdependence of communities, countries and the environment is under-developed.

Music

Key Stage 2: Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

- 226 The standard of singing, as exemplified in assemblies and recordings of a variety of whole-school and group performances in concerts, is good. The well attended choir achieves high standards in performing a wide range of pieces from different cultures and traditions. The achievements of the choir are a positive role model within the school and this has a positive impact on overall standards.
- 227 In Years 3 and 4, pupils confidently identify ascending and descending sequences of notes and demonstrate a developing understanding of tempo. They make good progress in creating musical sequences using ICT. They express preferences, understand the importance of the beginning and ending of a piece of music in setting the mood and are adept at varying the tempo. More-able pupils show an understanding that different sounds create contrasting moods and images.
- 228 In Year 5, pupils have a developing knowledge of the musical elements. They listen again to their previous compositions and suggest improvements. Working in small groups pupils enthusiastically experiment with tuned and untuned instruments to refine their musical sequences based on a fairground ride. More-able pupils begin to plan, record and time the order of different parts of their piece to enhance the portrayal of fairground sounds.

- 229 In Year 6, pupils achieve similarly good outcomes in their compositions linked to their studies of the Second World War in Wales. In response to pictures drawn by pupils, the class successfully works in small groups to improvise and create simple compositions using a range of tuned and untuned instruments. One group in particular, showed effective use of dynamics and arranged sounds effectively to create a specific mood.
- 230 Through whole-school occasions, such as assemblies, pupils gain knowledge of a variety of composers and musical genre.
- 231 Across the key stage, pupils are making good progress in musical knowledge and skills, albeit from a low base. First-hand evidence indicates that improved provision is having a positive impact on standards. Furthermore, the provision of instrumental tuition for strings, enables a good number of pupils to achieve well.

Shortcomings

- 232 Pupils use and understand a limited range of musical terms.
- 233 Although pupils are developing performing and composing skills well, their competence in refining and appraising their work is at an early stage of development.
- 234 Pupils' knowledge of the musical elements and their ability to make distinctions when comparing different kinds of music is at an early stage of development.

School's response to the inspection

- 235 We are pleased that the inspection team recognised our aim to be proactive in broadening pupils' horizons through a wide range of learning experiences and that staff provide good role models for pupils' personal, moral and social development. It was also recognised that parents find the school supportive and accommodating with a caring atmosphere. We are pleased that it was acknowledged that a strong feature of the school is that teachers and support staff establish good working relationships with pupils and that positive values and aims are reflected in the good quality of pastoral care and the school's friendly and supportive ethos. The school was viewed as calm and well ordered, with well behaved, friendly pupils who displayed positive attitudes both to work, to each other; and showed respect, understanding and sensitivity to one another.
- 236 In addition, we are pleased that inspectors recognised that pupils learn about the importance of community values through the many opportunities the school provides for them to participate and play a significant role within the local community. Provision to promote the performing arts was seen as very well reflected in the high standards of performance evident in school productions and concerts.
- 237 An action plan will be put into place to address the recommendations of the report. The plan will aim to raise standards and further develop key skills, including bilingual competence and independent learning. We will also ensure that monitoring, assessment and planning will be tailored to improving progress and differentiation for the more-able and less-able pupils. We will also ensure that statutory requirements for information for parents and carers are met in school documentation. The staff and the governing body have already acted upon the Health and Safety issues highlighted in the report.
- 238 The recommendations of the report will be addressed as a high priority within the school and a planned timetable will be implemented which will include the development of a policy guide for teaching and learning, particularly focussing on the subject areas identified in the report and the continued targeting of under achieving pupils, particularly boys, as identified in our School Development Plan.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ton Pentre Junior School
School type	Community Junior
Age-range of pupils	7 – 11 years
Address of school	Bailey Street Ton Pentre Rhondda Cynon Taff
Postcode	CF41 7EL
Telephone number	01446 435436

Headteacher	Mr Kerry Steele
Date of appointment	1 st January 1992
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr V. Hanly
Registered inspector	Mr Michael T. Ridout
Dates of inspection	15 th – 17 th January 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	-	-	-	-	43	28	37	26	134

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	6	1	6.5

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	20.6 : 1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	-
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	-
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	27
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.3 : 1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of School
Spring 2006	-	-	92.0
Summer 2006	-	-	92.8
Autumn 2006	-	-	94.4

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	17
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2006							Number of pupils in Y6		42			
Percentage of pupils at each level												
			D	A	N	W	1	2	3	4	5	
English	Teacher assessment	School	-	-	-	-	-	4.8	28.6	45.2	21.4	
		National	0.4	0.1	1.1	0.3	0.7	4.1	14.7	46.7	31.7	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	-	-	-	-	-	11.9	19.0	54.8	14.3	
		National	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.5	3.4	15.1	47.2	32.0	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	14.3	50.0	35.7	
		National	0.4	0.1	1.0	0.3	0.3	1.6	10.6	51.1	34.6	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment			
In the school	64.3%	In Wales	74%

- 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
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 three inspectors and a peer assessor appointed by Estyn who worked for seven inspector days (over three days) gathering first-hand evidence. In total, 30 lessons or parts of lessons were observed and standards and teaching graded. Inspectors evaluated the pupils' work.
- The headteacher 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. The school was unable to make available the full range of pupils' work from the previous academic year, in the subjects inspected. Inspectors sought the views of a number of pupils and gathered evidence of the standards achieved in discussions with them.
- A large amount of documentation provided by the school was analysed both before and during the inspection.
- There was a limited range of evidence available to exemplify standards, particularly in Welsh as a second language, design and technology and geography.
- The registered inspector held a meeting attended by seven parents before the inspection and considered 33 parents' responses to a questionnaire.
- At the end of the inspection, the main findings of the inspection were discussed with the headteacher in his role as the nominee. A short time after the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, 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 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards? Key question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources? English Design and technology Music
Mrs. A. Evans Team inspector	Key question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community? Key question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? Resources: part of Key Question 7; Mathematics Welsh second language Geography
Mrs. E. Harvey Peer Assessor	Assisted in gathering evidence and judging standards
Mr. J. Foley Lay inspector	Aspects of Key Questions: 1, 3 and 4.

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:
Baker-Phillips Educational Communications Ltd.
Oaks Lea
Knolton
Overton
Wrexham
LL13 0LF
Wrexham Office 01978 710332
Lydney Office 01594 510414