

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

**Ysgol Dolbadarn
Llanberis
Gwynedd
LL55 4SH**

School Number: 6612042

Date of Inspection: 20/11/06

by

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

The inspection of Ysgol Dolbadarn took place between 20/11/06 and 22/11/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Wil Williams 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. Ysgol Dolbadarn serves the village of Llanberis and the Nant Peris area. There are 164 full-time pupils on roll, as well as 25 part-time nursery children. Children are admitted to the school on a full-time basis in the September following their fourth birthday.
2. Welsh is the main language of the homes of some 67% of the pupils, but the school maintains that 88% of them now speak Welsh to a standard which is equivalent to first language. Welsh is the main language of the learning and teaching in the school.
3. The school considers that the area it serves is neither prosperous nor economically deprived. 10% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, a percentage that is lower than county and national averages.
4. In the school's judgement and according to Base Assessments evidence, the attainment of a high percentage of the pupils is average when they start school. Approximately a quarter of the pupils, including eight pupils with a statutory statement, have additional learning needs. This figure is slightly higher than county and national averages.
5. A Speech and Language Unit, which is part of Gwynedd Education Authority's provision, is located in the school.
6. During the inspection, two teachers [including the deputy head] were on maternity leave and another teacher on secondment with the Local Education Authority.
7. There have not been any significant changes in the school since the last inspection which was held in the autumn term 2000. The present head was appointed to his post in January 2000.

The school's priorities and targets

8. The school's priorities and targets for 2006 – 2007 include:
 - raising standards in information and communication technology;
 - ensuring that pupils play a more prominent role in the evaluation of their own work;
 - giving oral work a higher status in lessons and raising the standard of pupils' factual writing;
 - working towards gaining the Eco School Bronze Award.

Summary

9. The inspection team's findings agree with the school's judgements in its self-evaluation report in four of the seven key questions. In three of the questions, the judgement of the inspection team is higher than the grades awarded by the school itself.
10. The school has made outstanding progress in addressing the nine Key Issues identified in the 2000 Report.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

11. In the lessons inspected, pupils' standards of achievement were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	89%	0%	0%	0%

12. Pupils' standards in lessons are higher than the Welsh Assembly Government [WAG] targets for the whole of Wales in 2007, namely that 98% of lessons are satisfactory [Grade 3] or better and that 65% are good [Grade 2] or better.
13. Pupils of all ages achieve good standards or better in the areas inspected. The pupils with additional educational needs make good progress.

14. The achievements of the children under five are as follows:

Areas of learning	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade 2	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 1	Grade 1
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 1	Grade 1
Creative development	Grade 1	Grade 1
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2

15. The general quality of the educational provision for the children under five is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

16. Standards achieved in the areas of learning and in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Area of learning	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Welsh	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information Technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 1	Grade 1

17. The children under five as well as the pupils in key stages 1 and 2, make good progress in their language and communication skills, in their numeracy skills and in information and communication technology.

18. Pupils across the age range are making good progress with their bilingual skills. By the time they reach key stage 2, a substantial majority of them communicate readily, both orally and in writing, in Welsh and in English.

19. In 2006, the results of the National Curriculum assessments in key stage 1 compare well with national results. With the exception of mathematics, the results in key stage 2 were lower than national performance levels and also lower than the results of schools which have a similar percentage of pupils eligible to receive free school meals.

20. Pupils make good progress in their learning and in their personal and social skills. They have positive attitudes to learning, work productively during lessons and persevere with their tasks for extended periods. Their behaviour is good and they are considerate and courteous in their dealings with others.

21. The creative skills of pupils across the age range are outstanding. They produce art work of a high standard and take part imaginatively in role play.

22. All the pupils make good progress in their ability to work independently and to make decisions about their own learning.
23. The pupils respect a variety of beliefs, attitudes and cultural and social traditions and have a good awareness of equal opportunities issues.
24. The average attendance percentage over the last three terms is 91.5%, a figure which is lower than county and national averages, and is an area where improvement is necessary. Most of the pupils arrive at school punctually, but a small core continues to arrive late for the morning session.

The quality of education and training

25. The teachers' knowledge of the requirements of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning and the subjects of the National Curriculum is good and they prepare lessons thoroughly.
26. The good working relationships between pupils and adults and between the pupils and each other lead to effective teaching and learning.
27. The teachers' presentations are interesting and lively, the pace of the teaching is appropriate and pupils' progress is monitored consistently. Resources of a high standard are provided for pupils and effective use is made of the interactive whiteboard.
28. There are outstanding features in the teaching of the children under five. The teachers have high expectations and encourage the pupils to make decisions and choices for themselves.
29. The range of strategies used by all the teachers as they attempt to raise the standards of pupils' writing and to encourage good standards of behaviour is also an outstanding feature.
30. Well organised systems are used to assess pupils' progress across the age range. The annual reports to parents are of a good standard and provide them with a clear picture of their children's achievements and progress.
31. The school's response to the learning needs of pupils is outstanding. The curriculum is broad and balanced and has been planned with care to ensure that there is progression, consistency and continuity in the pupils' experiences. The pupils' bilingual skills are developed well and due attention is given to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig.
32. The learning experiences promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Respect, tolerance and responsibility in relation to others and to the environment are encouraged. By means of the School Council, pupils' opinions are given due regard in the life of the school.

33. The pupils' learning is enriched by a very wide range of extra-curricular visits and activities, as well as by productive partnerships with local institutions and companies. These are outstanding features.
34. Parents are very supportive of the life of the school and through the activities of the Parent-Teacher Association make a substantial contribution to increasing the supply of teaching and learning resources.
35. Good links and partnerships have been established with the primary and secondary schools in the catchment area.
36. The provision made for promoting education for sustainable development is good and the school succeeds in raising pupils' awareness of global citizenship. Through the school's links with a town in Italy, the attention given to the European dimension is good.
37. Appropriate experiences are provided to develop pupils' entrepreneurial skills, their ability to make decisions, to solve problems and to work as members of a team.
38. The care and support provided for pupils is outstanding. Pupils are happy in school and feel they can turn to any staff member for guidance or support. They are given access to a personal, social and health education programme of high quality.
39. There are outstanding procedures in place for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Child protection arrangements are effective and the staff are well acquainted with them.
40. The provision for identifying the learning needs of individual pupils and for ensuring that there is suitable support for them is good.
41. Effective use is made of the 'Webster Stratton' strategy in every class to promote good behaviour and effective learning. This is an outstanding feature.
42. A wide range of policies involving equality, racial interrelationships and respecting diversity is implemented effectively.

Leadership and management

43. The quality of the head's leadership is outstanding. He leads the teaching team and the governing body in an exceptionally thoughtful manner and provides the school with a clear sense of direction.
44. The head is supported well by the deputy head and the teaching staff. They fulfil their monitoring and evaluation responsibilities thoroughly. Nevertheless, some of them are new in their posts and have not yet fully developed their role.

45. The governors know the school well and co-operate closely with the head and staff to provide the school with a clear sense of direction. They carry out their monitoring and evaluating role effectively.
46. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well and is aware of which areas and aspects it needs to develop. The opinions of parents and the School Council are considered when priorities for the School Development Plan are being identified.
47. The self-evaluation report submitted to the inspection team prior to the inspection is of outstanding quality.
48. There is a sufficient number of teachers and resources to teach every aspect of the curriculum. Teaching assistants and support staff make a significant contribution to the teaching and learning.
49. The space available in the school building is adequate for the number of pupils. Effective use is made of community resources for physical education activities.
50. There are appropriate procedures for responding to the access requirements of pupils with physical disabilities.
51. The arrangements made to provide non-contact time for teachers to plan, prepare and assess, are outstanding and have a positive effect on standards.
52. The school budget is managed with care by the head and governors, thus providing good value for money.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

- A1 *further develop the strategies established for raising the standard of pupils' writing;
- A2 *develop the monitoring and evaluating role of the co-ordinators who are new in their posts;
- A3 *raise attendance levels and improve the punctuality of the small number of pupils who arrive late for the morning sessions.

* Priorities in the School Development Plan

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

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

52. The inspection team's findings match the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.

53. In the lessons inspected, standards of achievement are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	89%	0%	0%	0%

54. Pupils' standards in lessons are higher than the Welsh Assembly Government [WAG] targets for the whole of Wales in 2007, namely that 98% of lessons are satisfactory [Grade 3] or better and that 65% are good [Grade 2] or better.

55. Pupils of all ages achieve good standards or better in the areas inspected. The pupils with additional educational needs make good progress towards achieving the targets set for them.

56. Standards of achievements for children under five are as follows:

Areas of learning	Nursery	Reception
Language, literacy and communication skills	Grade 2	Grade 2
Personal and social development	Grade 1	Grade 1
Mathematical development	Grade 2	Grade 2
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Grade 1	Grade 1
Creative development	Grade 1	Grade 1
Physical development	Grade 2	Grade 2

57. The general quality of the educational provision for the children under five is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.

58. Standards of achievement in the area of learning and the subjects inspected are as follows:

Area of learning	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Welsh	Grade 2	Grade 2
Science	Grade 2	Grade 2
Information technology	Grade 2	Grade 2
Geography	Grade 2	Grade 2
Religious education	Grade 1	Grade 1

59. Children under five achieve good standards in the key skills of language and communication, mathematics and information and communication technology.
60. Key stages 1 and 2 pupils achieve good standards and make good progress in the key skills of language and communication across all the subjects of the curriculum. They discuss their work readily, make useful contributions to class discussions, using appropriate vocabulary, and use their reading and writing skills effectively to gather information and to record their work.
61. Pupils make good progress in mathematics in the two key stages as they use and apply their numeracy skills to deal with practical tasks. The information and communication technology skills of the vast majority of pupils are good and they use a range of software confidently when dealing with the curriculum.
62. The bilingual competence of the children under five as well as the pupils in both key stages shows good progress. By the beginning of key stage 2, the vast majority of pupils communicate readily when speaking and writing in Welsh and in English.
63. In 2006, the percentage of key stage 1 pupils achieving Level 2 in the National Curriculum assessments was comparable to the national average in mathematics and science and slightly higher in Welsh. A good percentage of pupils achieved Level 3 in Welsh and science.
64. In key stage 2, the number of pupils achieving Level 4 in mathematics was similar to local and national performance levels, while the results in Welsh, English and science were almost 10% lower than the national performance. On average, slightly more than a quarter of the pupils achieved Level 5 in the four subjects. The vast majority of pupils progressed by two levels during the four years between the end key stages 1 and the end of key stage 2.
65. Over a period of three years, there is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys in either key stage.
66. Compared with schools which have a similar percentage of pupils eligible to receive school meals, the school's results in 2006 were as follows:

	Welsh	English	Mathematics	Science
Key Stage 1	◆		◆	◆
Key Stage 2	■	■	◆	■

- ◆ 50% highest and lower than the upper 25%
- 25% lowest

67. Pupils make good progress in their learning and in their personal and social skills. They have positive attitudes to learning, work productively during lessons and persevere and concentrate on their tasks for extended periods. They respond enthusiastically to questions and complete their tasks promptly.

68. Pupils' creative skills across the age range are outstanding. They produce art work of a high standard and take part imaginatively in role play.
69. The standard of pupils' behaviour is good. They have a clear understanding of the teachers' expectations and are considerate and courteous in their dealings with others.
70. From the early years, pupils make good progress in their ability to work independently as well as to make their own decisions about their learning.
71. Throughout the school, the pupils respect a variety of beliefs, attitudes and other cultural and social traditions. Their awareness of equal opportunities issues is good.
72. Pupils' understanding and knowledge of their community is developed effectively through educational visits and through working closely with a number of organisations in the village.
73. The average attendance percentage over the last three full terms was 91.5%, a figure which is lower than the county and national average and shows room for improvement. Most of the pupils arrive at school punctually but a small core continues to arrive late for the morning session.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

74. The inspection team's findings match the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
75. The quality of teaching was judged to be as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	89%	0%	0%	0%

76. The teachers' knowledge of the requirements of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning and the National Curriculum is good. They plan and structure the lessons thoroughly and the attention given to the needs, age and ability range in every class is good.
77. The good working relationships between the pupils and adults and between the pupils and each other lead to effective teaching and learning.
78. Purposeful intervention by the teachers helps pupils to succeed with their tasks and to make good progress during lessons.
79. Lively and interesting presentations sustain the attention of the pupils and ensure their engagement in their tasks. The pace of the teaching is appropriate, clear time limits are set and pupils' progress is monitored constantly.
80. The teachers prepare resources and work sheets of a high quality and effective use is made of the interactive whiteboard.
81. Appropriate attention is given to developing pupils' bilingualism and to ensuring that they are all given equal opportunities.
82. There are outstanding features in the teaching of the children under five. Class organisation is extremely effective, interesting and stimulating tasks are provided and the children are given opportunities to experiment with a range of materials and media. The teachers have high expectations and they encourage the children to make their own decisions and choices.
83. The range of strategies used by all the teachers in their efforts to raise the standard of pupils' writing and to promote good behaviour is also an outstanding feature.
84. In a small number of lessons, teachers' presentations are too long and advantage is not taken of opportunities to utilise pupils' misconceptions and misunderstandings as teaching points.

85. The quality of the assessment and reporting is good and meets the statutory requirements.
86. The well-organised and purposeful systems used to assess the progress of pupils across the age range enable the school to identify pupils with additional learning needs at an early stage. Good use is made of assessment outcomes to set targets and to plan for further progress.
87. End of key stage assessment results are analysed carefully to identify any trend and any matter which may require further attention. Useful portfolios of pupils' work are maintained in a number of subjects for the purpose of moderating teacher assessment.
88. Pupils' work is marked regularly and constructive comments are added which help them to improve their work.
89. The practice of sharing aims with the pupils at the beginning of lessons and discussing the success of their work with them during the plenary sessions, contributes well to increasing pupils' understanding of the purpose of assessment and helps them to understand what they need to do to improve their work.
90. The annual reports to parents provide a clear picture of their children's achievements and progress in the subject areas and they also contain relevant comments about their personal and social development.

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

91. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report insofar as the school awarded Grade 2 to this key question. In arriving at its judgement, the school has not given sufficient consideration to the outstanding features in the quality of the curriculum and the thoroughness of the schemes of work.
92. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the statutory requirements. The provision is inclusive and ensures equal opportunities and access to all the pupils.
93. The quality of the school's curriculum planning is outstanding. The schemes of work are concise documents which provide useful guidance for the teachers and ensure that there is continuity and progression in pupils' learning. The planning for the teaching of the key skills, the basic skills and personal and social education is clear. The teachers' practice of planning co-operatively ensures that there is progression, consistency and continuity in the pupils' experiences.
94. Pupils' bilingual skills are promoted well by the curricular provision and the day-to-day activities in the school. The attention given to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig and to other cultures, is good.
95. The learning experiences provided effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils benefit from the opportunities provided for them during lessons, during acts of corporate worship and during circle time sessions to reflect and to discuss personal issues important to them. These experiences promote respect, responsibility and tolerance towards others and the environment. The discussions held in the School Council ensure that pupils' opinions are given a place in the life of the school.
96. Pupils' learning is enriched by a very wide range of educational visits, field work and extra-curricular activities. Partnerships have been established with a wide range of individuals, voluntary and community organisations and with local companies. These activities have a positive effect on learning standards and are an outstanding feature in the school's provision.
97. A good partnership has been established with parents. Parents are very supportive of the school's work and through the activities of the Parent Teacher Association make a substantial contribution to improving the quality of resources available in the classrooms. This was corroborated in the pre-inspection questionnaires completed by parents. There are effective arrangements for communicating with parents.

98. Good links have been established with the other primary schools in the catchment area and there are effective arrangements for transferring Y6 pupils to the local secondary school.
99. Good arrangements have been made to promote education involving sustainable development. There are good links with environmental establishments and paper recycling arrangements are in operation throughout the school. The provision included in the curriculum for raising pupils' awareness of the importance of protecting the environment is good.
100. Through subjects such as geography, art and personal and social education, the school successfully raises pupils' awareness of global citizenship. Good attention is given to the European dimension through the links established with a town in Italy.
101. Provision for developing pupils' enterprise skills is good. Appropriate experiences are provided for pupils in areas such as decision-making skills, problem solving and working as members of a team.
102. The breadth of the learning experiences provided enables pupils to develop valuable lifelong learning skills. These include bilingualism and personal and social education.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

103. The inspection team's findings concur with the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
104. The coherence and quality of the arrangements made to ensure pupils' care and the manner in which the school acts consistently to deal with matters involving pupils' welfare, are outstanding features.
105. Pupils are happy in the school and have good relationships with each other and with the staff. The school is a caring community where pupils feel they can turn to any member of staff for guidance or help. The quality of the care, support and guidance provided for individuals by the teachers and other members of the school's staff is an outstanding feature.
106. There is good co-operation with parents, the agencies of the Local Education Authority and the external agencies which are involved in the welfare and care of pupils.
107. The children under five settle in quickly at the school. Pupils who are admitted during the course of the school year are given good support by the other pupils and by the teachers.
108. Pupils are given regular access to a personal and social education and health education programme which is of high quality. The School Council is an effective means of enabling pupils to influence decisions about their own welfare in the school.
109. The school works effectively to monitor attendance and punctuality.
110. The implementation of policies and procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils, especially at the beginning and end of the school day, is an outstanding feature.
111. Effective child protection arrangements are in place and the staff are familiar with them.
112. The quality of the provision for pupils with additional learning needs is an outstanding feature. The needs of individual pupils are identified at an early stage and effective action is taken in accordance with the school policy. The arrangements for assessing pupils' needs and for producing and reviewing individual education plans are implemented effectively by the subject co-ordinator. There is good co-operation between the school and the two designated members of the governing body with responsibility for additional learning needs.

113. Pupils who receive one-to-one tuition are given outstanding support by teachers and assistants in the classrooms. The positive attitudes shown towards them, together with the differentiated tasks provided for them, meet the varying needs of the pupils very effectively. Good support is provided outside the classrooms for individuals and small groups.
114. Effective strategies are implemented in every class for promoting good behaviour and ensuring that pupils' behaviour does not interfere with their own or other pupils' progress. This is an outstanding feature.
115. Another outstanding feature is the care taken to ensure that equal opportunities are provided for pupils with a variety of disabilities. Reasonable modifications are made to ensure that all pupils are given full access to the curriculum and to the building.
116. A wide range of effective policies involving gender equality, racial harmony and identifying and respecting diversity is implemented effectively.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

117. The findings of the inspection team differ from the Grade 2 judged by the school in its self-evaluation report. Evidence gleaned during the inspection shows that the school did not give sufficient regard to the quality of its leadership when arriving at a judgement.
118. The Grade 1 awarded to this Key Question is different from the Grade 2 awarded to Key Question 1. This can be attributed to the significant improvements carried out in the school since the last inspection and to the outstanding leadership provided to the governing body by the head in preparing the school for the current inspection in the face of substantial changes in the school's staffing.
119. The quality of the head's leadership is outstanding. He co-ordinates the work of the teaching team extremely thoughtfully, providing a clear sense of direction for the work of the school. High priority is given to fostering team work, raising standards of achievement and improving the quality of the educational provision.
120. The school's day-to-day procedures are based on firm principles and values. Equal opportunities are provided for all and the contributions of the pupils, parents, governors and staff are appreciated.
121. The quality of the school's leadership is outstanding. Aims have been set and comprehensive policies which concentrate on pupils' needs have been prepared. The staff and governors understand and implement them.
122. The head is well supported by the deputy head and teaching staff. They carry a fair proportion of the responsibilities and make a significant contribution to the development of the school. The subject co-ordinators fulfil their monitoring and evaluation duties thoroughly, but a few of them are new to their posts and have not yet fully developed their role.
123. Very detailed attention is given to local and national priorities in the school's programme of work. The school has implemented a good number of the Basic Skills Agency's literacy and numeracy schemes and has participated in a number of national projects such as the Keep Wales Tidy campaign.
124. The whole school targets set at the end of the key stages are challenging and realistic and are based on a detailed assessment of the expected performance of individual pupils.

125. Effective performance management arrangements have been established for identifying the professional needs of teachers and for improving their teaching competence and skills. Procedures for the induction of newly qualified teachers are an outstanding feature.
126. The governors are well informed about the school and co-operate closely with the head and staff. The comprehensive reports provided for them by the head and the subject co-ordinators, together with their monitoring visits to classes, enable them to play a proactive role in the development of the school. They have a good understanding of their role as a critical friend to the head.
127. They conform in full with the statutory requirements.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

128. The inspection team's findings correspond with the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report.
129. A critical culture has been firmly established as part of the school's self-improvement programme. The school is fully aware of its strengths and knows which aspects and subjects need to be developed. The school's judgement in its self-evaluation report corresponded with the inspection team's findings for four of the seven key questions.
130. A wide range of evidence is considered when the self-evaluation is being carried out. Written reports on the findings of the evaluations are presented to the governing body and systematic action taken to address any shortcomings noted. The evaluations pay detailed attention to whole-school issues as well as to the subjects of the curriculum.
131. Analytical and effective use is made of local and national benchmarking information for comparing the performance of the school with schools of a similar kind.
132. Formal arrangements have been made for canvassing the opinion of parents and the opinions of the School Council are considered when priorities are being set.
133. The self-evaluation report presented to the inspection team is of outstanding quality. It is clear and easily understood and draws upon evidence from a wide range of sources.
134. The School Development Plan is a robust instrument and provides guidance for development as well as a clear sense of direction for the school's work. There is a strong link between the priorities of the Plan and the priorities which emanated from the self-evaluations. Developments are planned with care, the expected outcomes noted, responsibilities apportioned to individuals and the necessary resources identified.
135. The school has made outstanding progress in addressing the nine Key Issues identified in the 2000 Inspection.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

136. The findings of the inspection team differ from the Grade 2 judged by the school in its self-evaluation report. The school has not given sufficient consideration to the outstanding features in the manner it manages and develops the staff and the use it makes of its financial resources.
137. The number of suitably qualified teachers in the school is sufficient to teach every aspect of the curriculum. Full advantage is taken of teachers' specialisms by exchanging classes for a substantial number of subjects.
138. The teachers are supported by classroom assistants and other ancillary staff who all contribute effectively to the teaching and learning.
139. The school has adequate resources for all the age groups, including the children under five and all the subjects. Many of the resources are of high quality and regular and effective use is made of them in the lessons. The effect of the recent investment in resources for information technology and assessment is already evident in the improvement in standards.
140. The space available in the school is adequate for the number of pupils on roll and the building is maintained in a tidy condition. Effective use is made of community resources for activities involving physical education.
141. There are appropriate procedures for responding to the access requirements of pupils with physical disabilities.
142. The arrangements made for managing and developing staff is an outstanding feature of the school's work. Very effective use is made of the time allocated for teachers to plan, prepare and assess. Through careful timetabling and exchanging classes, these arrangements have a positive effect on standards.
143. The school's resources and the decisions made in connection with them are consistent with the school's priorities. The head and governors plan the use of the school's financial resources with care and review their decisions regularly in order to secure value for money. The implementation of these arrangements is an outstanding feature.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under 5s

Language, literacy and communication skills

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

144. The nursery children listen and respond enthusiastically to stories and have memorised a good range of songs and nursery rhymes. They communicate their needs clearly, ask questions and listen carefully to the responses. They relate past experiences with confidence and discuss their play activities in detail. They offer explanations about events depicted in illustrations and select and handle books appropriately.
145. They understand the purpose of a number of the functions of writing and enjoy making marks and basic writing experiences.
146. The reception children listen attentively to teachers and other adults and follow instructions accurately and easily. They talk clearly in a variety of situations. They identify the sound and form of letters, turn to books for enjoyment and repeat a number of the stories found in them. The vast majority form letters and numbers accurately and carefully and many write their names clearly. They work well in groups as they produce ideas for stories.

Shortcomings

147. There are no important shortcomings

Personal and social development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

148. The ability of both the nursery and reception children to make their own decisions and choices about their learning and to work independently is outstanding. They investigate and experiment very confidently in new learning situations and behave in a remarkably mature way when following the work patterns established in their class.

Good features

149. The nursery children have settled in happily at school and have learnt to behave appropriately and to play together. They express their gratitude regularly and are beginning to understand that they need to take turns and share equipment and toys. They concentrate for increasingly longer periods when involved in various activities.

150. The reception children care for others and show that they understand their needs and feelings. They have established very secure relationships with adults and with the other children in their class.

Shortcomings

151. There are no important shortcomings

Mathematical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

152. The nursery children play number games, sort shapes and count confidently. They classify, order, compare and count familiar objects with increasing accuracy and are beginning to understand the mathematics of money. Through activities with sand and water, they become familiar with simple mathematical terms.
153. The reception children compare objects of various sizes and place them on the basis of certain criteria. The vast majority count up to ten objects correctly and record them using the appropriate numerals. They all identify and name familiar two dimensional shapes and draw simple graphs. They understand that there are different kinds of coins and that it is necessary to have money to pay for goods in the shop.

Shortcomings

154. There are no important shortcomings.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

155. The nursery and reception children's ability to deal with investigative activities is outstanding. They have a very secure understanding of materials and of how it is possible to change them by adding water.

Good features

156. The nursery children talk confidently about their homes and about the various kinds of houses in their village. They have a basic understanding of the seasons and their characteristics and are beginning to understand the concept of time. They describe various kinds of weather in some detail and describe the kinds of clothes they would wear on wet or dry days.

157. The reception children make increasing use of the computer in their activities. They control the mouse to produce pictures and to make images move across the screen. They know the difference between town and country, discuss old artefacts and their purpose and explain the various countries from which we receive food.

Shortcomings

158. There are no important shortcomings

Physical development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

159. The nursery children's awareness of their own bodies and growth is developing well. They move confidently and with increasing control and coherence and use a variety of apparatus with increasing skill and confidence. They understand the difference between running, walking, jumping and hopping and use large play equipment confidently. They handle small apparatus, such as pencils, scissors, and clay and paint brushes, skilfully for appropriate purposes.
160. The reception children make good progress in their physical skills as they use building blocks, scissors, writing tools and paint brushes. They follow instructions in detail when playing with large equipment in the school hall and make sensible use of space.

Shortcomings

161. There are no important shortcomings.

Creative development

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

162. The nursery and reception children are remarkably confident when making decisions about colours and experimenting creatively with a very extensive range of media. They produce detailed pictures, imaginative paintings and three-dimensional models of high quality.

Good features

163. The nursery children enjoy and respond to rhythm in music and produce their own musical compositions, using instruments and their voices. The reception children role play creatively and confidently in the various areas of the classroom.

Shortcomings

164. There are no important shortcomings.

Welsh first language

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

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

Good features

165. Key stage 1 pupils listen attentively and respond well to the teachers' instructions. They express themselves clearly and talk confidently with a good number of them showing that they have a wide vocabulary and a secure grasp of the language's basic syntax. The children from non-Welsh-speaking homes make good progress in their listening and speaking skills.
166. Key stage 2 pupils make good progress in their oral skills. They are confident as they ask and answer questions in a variety of formal situations, listen attentively to others and contribute confidently to discussions. By Y5, a high percentage of the pupils are able to express opinions and to respond to other viewpoints. A good number of the pupils express themselves well.
167. Key stage 1 pupils use a number of appropriate strategies in their reading. They have a secure grasp of the alphabet; they recognise many familiar words and decode those which are less familiar. The most competent readers read fluently and with appropriate intonation.
168. Key stage 2 pupils make good progress with their reading. The vast majority read expressively and fluently and discuss the contents of their books intelligently. They read from a variety of print sources, including fiction and reference books, work sheets and computer screens. They have a good understanding of information systems in texts and in libraries.
169. The writing standards of approximately half the pupils in key stage 1 are good. In Y1 they form letters accurately and copy correctly, with the most able pupils writing their own stories. Y2 pupils make effective use of vocabulary lists and writing frames to produce a variety of original compositions. They use an appropriate range of sentence patterns and they have an appropriate understanding of punctuation. A small core of the pupils writes extended and well developed compositions.
170. Key stage 2 pupils write in a variety of forms, including descriptive, factual and creative writing. They understand the need to vary the register and form of their language according to the various tasks set for them and are aware of the fact that using the concise form of the verb, phrases and comparisons improves the quality of their written work.

171. A substantial minority of key stage 2 pupils write skilfully and in an interesting manner, showing that they have a good grasp of expression, structure and a sense of audience.

Shortcomings

172. The written work of a small number of pupils in each class work contains spelling and punctuation errors and is limited in its scope.

Science

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

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

Good features

173. Pupils respond confidently to the teacher's suggestions as to how they should carry out investigations. They put forward their own ideas, suggest how the investigations should be carried out and make simple predictions about the expected outcomes. They have a good understanding of the requirements of a fair test and carry out a good variety of investigations and experiments, making detailed observations and measurements. They use a good range of tables and block graphs to record their observations.
174. Key stage 1 pupils' knowledge and understanding of the programmes of study is good. They compare the properties of various materials in detail and use the appropriate scientific vocabulary to describe them. Their knowledge and understanding of the growth and development of people and animals is secure, they describe the conditions necessary for the growth of green plants, know about the forces of pulling and pushing and how to create a simple electrical circuit.
175. Key stage 2 pupils gather information from a variety of sources such as books, and by using information technology. They present their work in a variety of forms and use the relevant scientific vocabulary appropriately.
176. Key stage 2 pupils plan investigations methodically and in a good range of contexts. They put forward their own suggestions and agree on the steps to be followed. They have a good grasp of the requirements of a fair test and of the need to measure accurately to ensure reliability. They present their findings effectively using text, diagrams, tables and suitable graphs. They put forward sensible findings based on their results.
177. Key stage 2 pupils' knowledge and understanding of the programmes of study is good. Their knowledge of life processes and the way in which living things adapt to their habitats is secure. They recall their previous learning about materials and forces in appropriate detail.

Shortcomings

178. There are no important shortcomings.

Information technology

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

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

Good features

179. The pupils, in both key stages, use suitable software to support and reinforce their work across the curriculum.
180. Key stage 1 pupils form simple sentences with a word processor, varying the size and colour of the print. They make effective use of software to produce pictures.
181. The pupils make appropriate use of graphical programmes to collate, organise and record their findings and to produce a variety of graphs.
182. By the end of key stage 1, pupils use the mouse confidently to control the on-screen cursor to make useful choices. The more able pupils save, access and print their work independently.
183. In key stage 2, pupils make good use of their word-processing skills to produce work which is well presented. They edit and improve their work without assistance by using a variety of effects, such as downloading clipart and controlling the size and location of a picture on the page. By Y5, the pupils use appropriate software and a digital camera skilfully to produce colourful and interesting multimedia presentations.
184. Key stage 2 pupils produce simple procedures for forming two dimensional shapes and angles of different sizes.

Shortcomings

185. A small minority of pupils at the top end of key stage 2 are not sufficiently skilled in their use of information technology.

Geography

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

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

Good features

186. Key stage 1 pupils' knowledge of their own locality is good. They locate their village on a map of Wales and describe the physical and human features of the area in detail, using appropriate vocabulary. They use their knowledge well when comparing the geographical features of their area with another.
187. Key stage 1 pupils produce an illustrated map of their journey to school and draw other simple maps which contain a key and relevant symbols. They make good use of simple co-ordinates when denoting locations on a plan and estimate relative distances by using terms such as near, far and very far.
188. Key stage 2 pupils know how the height of land is shown on a map, and by Y5 they work well with maps of different scales, including Ordnance Survey maps. The vast majority have an understanding of four figure co-ordinates and make confident use of the key and symbols on a map. They use atlases confidently and identify continents and oceans on a map of the world.
189. Through effective fieldwork, key stage 2 pupils are able to make sensible comparisons between their own and other localities. They use their knowledge of the features which are similar and those which are different between the areas and put forward opinions and reasons to support their studies.
190. Key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of some of the ways in which people are trying to protect the environment through the use of sustainable development.

Shortcomings

191. There are no important shortcomings.

Religious education

Key Stage 1: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 2: Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Outstanding features

192. Pupils' knowledge about the great religions of the World and their ability to compare the characteristics of those religions is outstanding.
193. The pupils' knowledge of the contents of the programmes of study is especially thorough across the age ranges.

Good features

194. In key stage 1, pupils have a good awareness of the Bible as a book which Christians regard as special and can recall a number of its stories in detail. They know that Jesus Christ advocated a particular way of life and their awareness of values such as friendship and kindness towards others, is good.
195. They know about the main Christian festivals and discuss some of the main events connected to them.
196. Key stage 2 pupils' have an increasing knowledge of the Bible as a sacred book; they also know about the work of William Morgan and about Mari Jones' journey to Bala. They have a good awareness of the features and varying forms of worship used by the various denominations and know about the artefacts which are held in chapels and churches. They discuss religious symbolism intelligently.
197. Key stage 2 pupils' have a good understanding of the manner in which religion influences the way in which people think and behave. They express opinions about contentious issues and accept that the opinions of other pupils differ from their own.

Shortcomings

198. There are no important shortcomings.

School's response to the inspection

The staff and governors of Ysgol Dolbadarn are pleased to state that the inspection was both fair and constructive. The content of the report is a source of pride for all who are involved in the school.

The inspection process was both open and honest and the professional dialogue between the school and the inspectors resulted in constructive recommendations. It was felt that the role of the nominee was a particularly valuable aspect of the inspection process.

The comments which indicate that the school has made outstanding progress since the last inspection are appreciated. It is very gratifying to have reached a situation where pupils, across the age range, achieve good or better standards in all the subjects inspected, but this also offers a new level of challenge as the school aims to maintain and improve these standards still further.

The inspection provided the school with an opportunity to look in detail at every aspect of its work, and the preparation of the self-evaluation report was particularly rewarding. The report makes it evident that the school did not, in every instance, give sufficient consideration to its outstanding features when coming to a judgement, and the readiness of the team to award a higher grade in such cases is appreciated.

We are proud of the fact that the care and support provided for pupils is outstanding. It was also encouraging to note that the teachers have high expectations and that the school's response to the pupils' learning needs is excellent. The inspection has certainly confirmed the quality of the teaching in the school and has motivated the staff to further develop some elements within it. The school faced the inspection during a period of instability in its staffing, and as a result, the comments regarding the crucial role of effective staff teamwork is a source of great pride.

The school is already involved in addressing the recommendations regarding the raising of attendance levels and improving punctuality. The Governing Body has already set specific targets in relation to these issues. A post-inspection action plan will be produced and these elements incorporated in the current and future School Development Plan.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Dolbadarn
School type	Nursery and Primary
Age range of pupils	4 – 11
Address of school	Ffordd Capel Coch, Llanberis, Gwynedd
Post code	LL55 4SH
Telephone number	01286 870711

Head	Mr Rolant N Wynne
Date of appointment	January 2000
Chair of governors	Dr Gwyn Williams
Registered inspector	Wil Williams
Dates of inspection	20-22 November 2006

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	10	21	31	17	25	17	29	24	174

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	7	2	8.4

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	20.5:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	12.5
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	4.5:1
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	26.5
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.3:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of School
Autumn 2005	89.2	84.5	90.3
Spring 2006	90.4	87.8	90.5
Summer 2006	91.5	90.4	93.4

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	10%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	1

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 1:

National Curriculum Assessment KS1 results 2006			Number of pupils in Y2					24
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	
Welsh	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	8	54	33	
		National	0	2	8	64	26	
Welsh: Oracy	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	8	54	33	
		National	0	1	10	64	25	
Welsh: Reading	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	8	67	21	
		National	0	2	15	60	22	
Welsh : Writing	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	21	67	13	
		National	0	2	18	66	13	
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	13	71	17	
		National	0	2	10	63	24	
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	4	4	67	25	
		National	0	2	9	65	24	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh [first language] according to teacher assessment

In the school	79%	In Wales	80%
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National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment Key Stage 2 Results 2006			Number of pupils in Y6							15	
Percentage of pupils at each level											
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	7	27	33	33
		National	0	0	1	0	1	4	15	47	32
Welsh	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	33	33	33
		National	0	0	0	0	1	4	17	50	26
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	47	27
		National	0	0	1	0	1	3	15	47	32
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	47	27
		National	0	0	1	0	0	2	11	51	35

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh [first language]

In the school	60%	In Wales	74.3
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- 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

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Three inspectors spent a total of eight inspector days in the school, and met as a team prior to the inspection.

The inspectors attended:

- 34 lessons or part-lessons and pupils were heard reading in both languages;
- every class;
- the corporate worship sessions.

Members of the team held meetings with:

- the staff, governors and parents before the inspection;
- the head, teachers, support staff and groups of pupils during the inspection.

The team also considered:

- the school's self evaluation report;
- 18 responses to the parents' questionnaire;
- the comprehensive documentation provided by the school prior to and during the inspection; and
- a wide range of current and work completed by pupils prior to the inspection.

The inspection team held meetings with the staff and governors at the end of the inspection.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Wil Williams	Context; Summary; Recommendations; Appendices Key questions 1;2,5 and 6 Under 5, Welsh, religious education
Trebor Roberts	Contributions to key question 2. Key questions 3; 4 and 7 Science, information technology, geography
Wil Owen	Contributions to key questions 1; 3; 4 and 7
Rolant Wynne	Nominee

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Acknowledgement

The inspectors wish to thank the governors, head, staff, pupils and parents of the school for their willing cooperation during the inspection.