

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Y Bont Faen Primary School
Borough Close
Cowbridge
Vale of Glamorgan
CF71 7BN**

School Number: 6732151

Date of Inspection: 10th November 2008

by

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Y Bont Faen Primary 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 Y Bont Faen Primary took place between 10/11/08 and 12/11/08. An independent team of inspectors, led by Gregory John Owens undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

Grade 1	good with outstanding features
Grade 2	good features and no important shortcomings
Grade 3	good features outweigh shortcomings
Grade 4	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
Grade 5	many important shortcomings

There are three types of inspection.

For **all** inspections, there is a written report on seven key questions.

For **short** inspections, there are no subject reports.

For **standard** inspections, there are also reports on six subjects.

For **full** inspections, there are also reports on all subjects.

Estyn decides the kind of inspection that a school receives, mainly on the basis of its past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection. All nursery schools, special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a **standard** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs.

The term 'Reception' (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school who reach the age of 5 during the academic year. Year 1 refers to the year group of pupils who reach the age of 6 during the academic year and so on. Year 13 is the year group of students who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

Key stage 1	Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Y Bont Faen School is situated in the small town of Cowbridge in the Vale of Glamorgan. The school describes its catchment area as being relatively prosperous overall. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is four percent. The school draws its pupils mainly from the town but also from the surrounding area.
2. The school caters for pupils between three and eleven years of age and there are 215 (full time equivalent) pupils on roll. These are accommodated in nine classes comprising one reception, one Year 1 class, one Year 2 class, one Year 3 class and one Year 4 class. There is one mixed Year 5/6 class, one Year 5 class and one Year 6 class. There is also a part time nursery which caters for 25 pupils in the mornings. Plans are in place to hold afternoon sessions, from January 2009, catering for nine pupils initially, plus an additional eight pupils in the Summer Term.
3. Baseline assessments indicate pupils' ability to be higher than average for the Vale of Glamorgan County Borough and generally consistent over the last 4 years. There are 44 pupils identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) one of whom has a statement of SEN. There is little ethnic or linguistic variation amongst pupils. There are five pupils whose first language is neither English nor Welsh.

The school's priorities and targets

4. The school's vision statement is 'Inspire to learn; inspire for life' and the school defines its main priorities as follows:
 - to promote a happy, caring school where all may learn together, where each individual is valued and feels their own worth and where co-operation and collaboration are evident in both living and learning;
 - to ensure the engagement of all pupils throughout the school enabling them to be independent learners who achieve their full potential and become equipped with the necessary skills and talents for life in the twenty-first century;
 - to provide experiences to ensure the cultural, moral, spiritual, social and physical development of all children.
5. The school was last inspected in the Autumn Term 2002 (report published January 2003). Current targets identified in the school development plan (SDP) include commitments to:

- develop pupils' subject specific skills in identified areas together with the progressive improvement of their cross curricular skills in communication, number, information communication technology (ICT) and thinking;
- enhance provision in response to national initiatives of the Foundation Phase and new National Curriculum 2008;
- target and motivate those who are 'hard to engage';
- improve communication with parents;
- further develop partnerships with other schools and links using the Education Business Partnership (EBP).

Summary

6. Y Bont Faen Primary is a good school with some outstanding features. The highly committed headteacher and staff succeed in creating a happy, caring school where individuals and learning are valued. Good opportunities to develop skills are available to all pupils.

Table of grades awarded

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

7. In key questions 3 and 4 the inspection team's findings agree with the school's self-evaluation. In key questions 1 and 2 and also in key questions 6 and 7 the team awarded one grade lower than the school's self-evaluation. This is because although outstanding features were seen, they were not sufficient to warrant a Grade 1. In key question 5 the team identified shortcomings and awarded a grade two levels below the school's own assessment.

Standards

8. Pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
9%	69%	22%	0%	0%

9. These figures are above those set as a target in the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) 'Vision into Action' document for primary schools that by 2010 at least 98% of lessons inspected should be Grade 3 or better and 65% Grade 2 or better.

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

Grades for the areas of learning in Foundation Phase classes

Area of Learning	Grade
Personal and Social Development, Well-being and Cultural Diversity	2
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	2
Mathematical Development	2
Welsh Language Development	3
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	2
Physical Development	2
Creative Development	2

Grades for subjects inspected at key stages 1 and 2

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Mathematics	2	2
Information Technology	2	2
Design Technology	2	2
Geography	2	2
Music	2	2

11. Overall progress made by pupils is good with no important shortcomings. Almost all pupils, including those with SEN and able pupils, make good progress regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background.
12. The majority of children in Foundation Phase make good progress with their speaking and listening skills and in developing their problem solving and creative abilities. In key stages 1 (KS1) and key stage 2 (KS2) pupils' skills are well developed. Many are outstandingly good in speaking and listening and use their skills effectively to work together and think creatively to solve problems. Levels of competence in literacy, numeracy and ICT are good with no important shortcomings.
13. In their bilingual development, although good features outweigh shortcomings, most pupils generally lack confidence and have limited competence in using their skills.
14. Teacher assessments at the end of KS1 over the last three years indicate that the numbers of pupils reaching the expected level in each of English, mathematics and science are consistently above local and national averages. When benchmarked against schools in a similar free school meal group, the school is in the top quarter in the last three years. Teacher assessments in KS2 for 2008 show the number of pupils reaching the expected level in each of English, mathematics and science as above local and national averages and, when benchmarked against schools in a similar free school meal group, the school is between the mid and upper quartiles. There was a similar

performance in 2006. In 2007 the benchmarked figure dropped towards lower quartiles but the generally good performance of those of average or above average ability was maintained.

15. At both key stages boys and girls perform well in comparison with the averages for their gender. In the last three years a higher proportion than that locally and nationally have achieved the higher grades of level three at the end of KS1 and of level five at the end of KS2 in teacher assessment.
16. Attendance rates are consistently good throughout the school, averaging 95%. This is above local and national averages.
17. Throughout the school pupils have positive attitudes towards their work, are enthusiastic and want to learn. They are very caring and supportive of each other in lessons and relate well to each other, to staff and visitors. Behaviour is outstandingly good.
18. Pupils demonstrate outstanding progress in their spiritual, moral and social development. This results in a happy, orderly community and is an overall strength of the school. Provision for cultural development is good and, from an early stage, pupils develop awareness of their Welsh heritage.
19. The school successfully prepares pupils to take an active role in society and pupils develop an appropriate understanding of the workplace.

The quality of education and training

20. The quality of teaching in the sessions observed was judged as follows:

Grades for teaching

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
10%	64%	21%	5%	0%

21. These figures are below those awarded for quality of teaching in Wales as reported in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training Annual Report (2006-07) of 80% at Grade 2 or better and below WAG targets for 2010 of 80% of teaching to be Grade 2 or better.
22. The quality of teaching is Grade 2 or above in 74% of observations and a strong overall feature is the good working relationship among pupils, teachers and support staff. However, there are variations in the quality of teaching and the good teaching exists alongside some weak practice.
23. Good features observed in teaching include:
 - well judged short term planning and effective use of resources;
 - clear exposition and explanation;
 - clear success criteria developed with pupils;

- varied and stimulating content;
 - skilful questioning and management of pupil responses;
 - opportunities for pupils to share and reflect on learning with partners;
 - a good pace of learning;
 - effective teaching of pupils with SEN;
 - good deployment of additional adults.
24. Shortcomings observed in teaching include:
- poor understanding and sharing of learning objectives by teachers;
 - unclear explanation of tasks and inconsistency of approach;
 - lack of pace and timing to develop key concepts and maintain pupils' interest.
25. Throughout the school insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils progressively to build the skills of bilingualism and their competence in speaking Welsh.
26. Foundation Phase practitioners plan activities that allow children to learn by experiences (experiential learning), across all seven areas of learning, and enable children to learn effectively through well structured play opportunities.
27. Overall arrangements for assessment, recording and reporting have good features with no significant shortcomings. The school uses a range of assessment data, including standardised tests to track pupils' progress effectively.
28. Feedback to pupils, including the marking of their work, is generally of a high standard.
29. Assessment that supports learning, and the use and sharing of success criteria, is well established and in the best practice is used outstandingly for developing skills. In some instances, however, there is a lack of clear understanding by teachers about strategies being implemented.
30. The school's recently developed assessment processes for Foundation Phase are manageable and usefully indicate children's progress.
31. Parents are appropriately informed about their children's progress and the school meets statutory requirements for assessing and reporting on the curriculum.
32. The curriculum meets the needs and aspirations of the range of pupils. The school is successful in developing skills and uses various enriching experiences built into planning. These include off-site visits to places of interest or for field work.
33. Schemes of work and curriculum maps are in place and the school is making good progress in moving towards the revised National Curriculum 2008. The improvement of basic and key skills is given high priority for the school and

teachers ensure that pupils have varied opportunities for developing their skills.

34. Partnerships with parents, other schools and providers and links to the community are effectively developed and enhance learning opportunities.
35. The curriculum in the Foundation Phase is designed to meet the interests and needs of young children.
36. Very good teacher-pupil relationships are a notable aspect of the school and pupils feel safe and happy. The quality of care, support and guidance provided for pupils, including provision for pupils with SEN, is an outstanding feature. The well-being of all learners is effectively promoted.

Leadership and management

37. The headteacher provides effective leadership and has been instrumental in leading very many successful initiatives which are now embedded into practice. There is a clear set of aims and a shared vision and common purpose. This is reflected in the life and work of the school which, overall, progresses well in delivering improvements and maintaining good standards.
38. Most leaders of learning have some involvement in monitoring progress in meeting school improvement targets but the regular, systematic role of all leaders and managers in overseeing improvement is not clearly defined.
39. The assistant headteacher gives very able leadership support. However, there is no set of appropriate responsibilities designated to, or adopted for, the role of deputy headteacher. Within the senior team this important key role is undeveloped and does not make positive impact on the central leadership tasks of raising standards.
40. The Governing Body is very committed and works effectively with the headteacher and other staff in the process of self-evaluation. The SDP sets relevant and appropriately challenging targets.
41. The school has generally made good progress in addressing key issues identified in its last inspection (2003), especially those related to provision for under-fives, key skills, resources, assessment and design technology. In these areas standards are now good with no important shortcomings. Pupils' key skills in communication are developed very well. However, the Governing Body does not meet the statutory requirements in relation to its annual report to parents and this was a key issue for action identified in the last inspection report.
42. The school is appropriately staffed and well resourced. The learning environment is bright and stimulating and is an effective setting for good learning and teaching. Display is skilfully used and the outdoor environment is well developed.

43. In the light of the standards achieved and the quality of learning experiences provided for the pupils, the school achieves good value for money.

Recommendations

- R1 Ensure that leadership and management responsibilities, at all levels, are appropriately defined and effectively distributed to support the raising of standards.
- R2 Further develop systematic monitoring of teaching and learning so that the best practice is spread throughout the school.
- R3 Improve pupils' standards in bilingual skills.
- R4 Conform with statutory requirements relating to the Governing Body's annual report to parents.

Aspects of R2 and R3 feature in the current School Development Plan.

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

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

44. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation judgement for this key question. Although outstanding features are recognised they are insufficient to support a judgement of Grade 1.
45. Standards of attainment and achievement are good with no important shortcomings, throughout the school.
46. Pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed in the subjects inspected are as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
9%	69%	22%	0%	0%

47. These figures are above those set as a target in the WAG 'Vision into Action' document for primary schools that by 2010 at least 98% of lessons inspected should be Grade 3 or better and 65% Grade 2 or better.
48. Standards in the areas of learning and subjects inspected are as follows:

Grades for the areas of learning in the Foundation Phase classes

Area of Learning	Grade
Personal and Social Development, Well-being and Cultural Diversity	2
Language, Literacy and Communication Skills	2
Mathematical Development	2
Welsh Language Development	3
Knowledge and Understanding of the World	2
Physical Development	2
Creative Development	2

Grades for subjects inspected at key stages 1 and 2

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Mathematics	2	2
Information Technology	2	2
Design Technology	2	2
Geography	2	2
Music	2	2

49. Almost all pupils, including those with SEN and able pupils, make good progress regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background. With few

exceptions pupils have a very positive approach to learning and reach agreed targets and goals set by the school.

50. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes.
51. The majority of children in Foundation Phase make good progress with their speaking and listening skills. They are developing their problem solving and creativity well, particularly when engaged in outdoor activities.
52. Baseline assessments taken on entry to the reception class illustrate, that when compared with local authority averages, both boys and girls score above in each of the seven aspects assessed. There is very little difference in the achievement of boys and girls. These baseline assessments when revisited demonstrate that all children make good ongoing progress and the the majority achieve standards in line with their ability.
53. In KS1 and KS2, most pupils' key skills are well developed. Many are outstandingly good in speaking and listening and use their skills effectively to work together and think creatively to solve problems. Almost all pupils make good progress in learning to read and the more able read with expression and fluency. Pupils make good progress in using writing for different purposes across the curriculum and are able to use ICT and numeracy skills for different functions and with no important shortcomings. Throughout the school, pupils do not generally demonstrate confidence in their bilingual competence. Their generally infrequent speaking of Welsh beyond simple single word answers limits the development of their language skills.
54. Teacher assessments at the end of KS1 over the last three years indicate the number of pupils reaching the expected level in English, mathematics and science as consistently above local and national averages. When benchmarked against schools in a similar free school meal group, the school is in the top quarter of those achieving the expected level in each of those subjects in the last three years.
55. Teacher assessments in KS2 for 2008 show the number of pupils reaching the expected level in each of English, mathematics and science as above local and national averages, and there was a similar performance in 2006. When benchmarked against schools in a similar free school meal group, the school is between the mid and upper quartiles and both boys and girls perform well in comparison with the averages for their gender. In 2007 these subject figures were lower than usual, and when benchmarked against schools in a similar free school meal group the school attainments for English, mathematics and science were located in the lower quartiles. However, pupils in that year made appropriate progress according to their ability and the generally good performance of those of average or above average ability was maintained.
56. Both boys and girls perform well in comparison with national and local averages for their gender.

57. In the last three years more pupils than national and local averages have achieved the higher grades of level three at the end of KS1 and of level five at the end of KS2.
58. Pupils make good progress towards fulfilling their potential and moving to their next stage of learning. Most pupils know what they need to do to improve and extend their learning. They have a good understanding of what they are taught and older and more able pupils are able to apply their understanding to new and unfamiliar tasks. In a few instances weak spelling and a lack of attention to detail in written work lowers standards.
59. Throughout the school pupils have positive attitudes towards their work, are enthusiastic and want to learn. They are very caring and supportive of each other in lessons and relate well to each other, to staff and visitors. Behaviour is outstandingly good; a clear code of conduct exists and pupils know what is expected of them and understand the need for rules. During break times pupils play happily together using the play apparatus, co-operating to share the outdoor trails and playground areas for different games and activities.
60. Attendance rates are consistently good throughout the school, averaging 95%. This is above local and national averages. The few pupils who are poor attenders have circumstances that are known to the school and there is a robust system for monitoring attendance and for contacting parents. Pupils are punctual for lessons and settle quickly. The school complies with all the requirements of NAW Circular 47/06 for registration and recording attendance.
61. Pupils demonstrate very good progress in their personal and social development which results in a happy, orderly community, and this is a major strength of the school. In KS1, pupils show a developing sense of fair play and respect for people's feelings and belongings. Throughout the school pupils show respect for each other in their everyday actions and recognise that those who are different to themselves are to be equally valued.
62. When participating in assemblies all indicate a growing understanding of moral issues and differences within society. For example they show positive attitudes to the beliefs and cultures of other societies, developed through their partnership with a school in Tanzania. In KS2, pupils demonstrate respect for diversity when discussing issues such as the American presidential elections.
63. Throughout the school pupils develop their capacity for collaboration and problem solving in lessons. They apply these skills productively in working together to raise funds for local or national causes. For example, they grow vegetables and plants in their well established school garden and sell them in their plant shop located at the front of the school. Others make items to sell at fund raising events. They are able to participate effectively in electing and running their School Council and their Eco Committee and understand their roles. In executing these activities they are alert to sustainability and the need to recycle and they show progress in their understanding of citizenship.

64. Pupils visit the nearby commercial centre and other locations to conduct surveys and representatives of local businesses visit the school regularly to give talks and to assist with projects. In both key stages most pupils can discuss these activities sensibly and demonstrate an appropriate awareness of the world of work.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

65. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation of Grade 1 for this key question and place it at Grade 2. This is because there were insufficient outstanding features for the higher grading.

66. The quality of teaching in the sessions observed was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
10%	64%	21%	5%	0%

67. These figures are below those awarded for quality of teaching in Wales as reported in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training Annual Report (2006-07) of 80% at Grade 2 or better and below WAG targets for 2010 of 80% of teaching to be Grade 2 or better.

68. The quality of teaching is Grade 2 or better in 74% of observations where there are no important shortcomings. In 21% there are shortcomings but these are outweighed by good features. In the remaining 5% there are shortcomings in important areas. The good teaching therefore exists alongside some weak practice.

69. In the majority of teaching, standards are good and the strong overall feature is the good working relationship among pupils, teachers, support staff, and other adults. Varied learning strategies are used and the tone, atmosphere and physical environment for learning is well sustained and helps pupils to make progress. Pupils often work well with a regular learning partner or in groups. In the few instances of outstanding practice, pupils are skilfully led through a sequence that consolidates their existing knowledge, offers active learning experiences that are stimulating and returns them to their tasks very well prepared for their next steps of learning.

70. Good features observed in teaching include:

- well judged short term planning and effective use of resources;
- clear exposition and explanation;
- clear success criteria developed with pupils;
- varied and stimulating content;
- skilful questioning and management of pupil responses;
- opportunities for pupils to share and reflect on learning with partners;
- a good pace of learning;
- effective teaching of pupils with SEN;
- good deployment of additional adults.

71. Shortcomings in lessons include:
- poor understanding and sharing of learning objectives;
 - unclear explanation of tasks and inconsistency of approach;
 - lack of pace and timing to develop key concepts and maintain pupils' interest.
72. In Foundation Phase, practitioners have a sound knowledge of how young children learn. Carefully planned experiential activities, across all seven areas of learning, enable children to learn through well structured play opportunities. There is also a good balance of teacher directed and child-initiated activities. Support staff are deployed effectively and make a highly significant contribution to children's learning. They plan alongside teachers and have the necessary skills to deliver the planning. There is a shared responsibility amongst the practitioners and a very good ethos that supports effective teamwork.
73. Wales and the Welsh dimension (*Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*) feature strongly in lessons. The incidental use of Welsh is practised by teachers fairly consistently throughout the school day during registration periods, assemblies, extra-curricular clubs and in lessons. However, insufficient opportunities are provided throughout the school for pupils progressively to develop their competence, and to consolidate sentence patterns, for example by encouraging them to ask for things in Welsh.
74. Teachers know their pupils well. They promote equal opportunities effectively through personal and social education (PSE), religious education and collective worship. They treat all pupils equally, irrespective of their race, gender or disability. Pupils with English as an additional language are quickly integrated into the life of the school and feel suitably supported. Both boys and girls have access to all areas of the curriculum and to out of school activities such as football.
75. Class teachers have a high awareness of the differing abilities of pupils in their classes and challenge the more able in their questioning and expectations. In most lessons Learning Support Assistants and other adults are deployed very effectively to ensure that those who need help or who have SEN receive attention. They make a very positive contribution to the learning opportunities available and develop fruitful relationships with those they teach. The school's Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and notes of differing provision (Provision Maps) for all groups in the class are kept with the class teachers to help teachers cater for and monitor the progress of individuals.
76. Arrangements for assessment, recording and reporting have good features with no significant shortcomings. The school meets statutory requirements for assessing and reporting on the curriculum.
77. Baseline assessment is administered on entry to the nursery class but the use and analysis of this information by the school is at an early stage of

development. Baseline data in the reception class is used to set targets for the end of KS1.

78. All practitioners working in the Foundation Phase make assessments by observing the children throughout the day. Systems are in place to make notes and this information is included in evaluations and then used to inform future planning and establish a way forward for individuals. Staff know the children very well and are aware of the next steps to take the learning forward.
79. The school's recently developed assessment processes for Foundation Phase are manageable and usefully indicate children's progress.
80. The school uses a range of assessment data to track pupils' progress effectively. Standardised tests are used from Year 1 to Year 6 as part of a Local Authority initiative. This data is used alongside twice yearly teacher assessment judgements to identify whether pupils are making appropriate progress. Individual pupils have a useful profile that identifies what they have achieved in writing and mathematics. This is updated on an annual basis.
81. End of Key Stage National Curriculum data is collected and analysed effectively but the sharing of this information with the Governing Body is at an early stage of development.
82. The arrangements and procedures for assessing and recording the progress and achievements of pupils with additional learning needs are very good. Early intervention strategies in the nursery are effective and use of IEPs ensures that pupils receive appropriate support, combined with challenging targets for improvement, reviewed on a regular basis.
83. Assessment data for pupils is made available to the associated comprehensive school from Year 3 onwards. This enables suitable support to be established prior to pupils' transfer.
84. The school is in the process of developing assessment portfolios for writing and mathematics as part of a cluster initiative. These documents are valuable tools that assist teachers to make accurate judgements regarding the levels of attainment of individual pupils. At present there are no systems in place to aid teacher moderation in the other aspects of English or in science.
85. Teachers and pupils agree individual targets in literacy and numeracy at the start of each year. Pupils are then involved in assessing how well they have met these targets, although this initiative is still in the early stage of development.
86. Assessment methods that support the learner ('Assessment for Learning') and the development of thinking skills have been a major focus for the whole school over recent years. The use and sharing of success criteria are well established and in the best practice constitute an outstanding tool for developing skills. Use of self and peer-assessment is a significant strength of

the school and almost all pupils are very positive about the use of success criteria and feel that it helps them to succeed with their work. In some instances, however, there is a lack of clear understanding by teachers as to why these strategies are being implemented and this has a negative impact on learning.

87. Feedback to pupils, including the marking of their work, is generally of a high standard and enables pupils to know what they have to do to improve.
88. Annual reports to parents are of good quality and meet statutory requirements. Opportunities are provided for both pupils and parents to comment on the report and parents are invited to contact the school to discuss the contents.

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

89. The inspection team's findings match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
90. Overall, the curriculum meets the needs and aspirations of all pupils. The school aims to develop skills through a wide range of stimulating learning experiences and a range of out of school activities, and it is successful in achieving this.
91. The school responds well to pupils' learning needs and provides equal access to a broad, relevant curriculum that meets legal requirements. Very effective use is made of the school grounds and the local environment as a stimulus for learning. The school's provision for pupils with additional learning needs, those with statements of SEN, and those for whom English is an additional language is outstanding.
92. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes.
93. The curriculum in the Foundation Phase is designed to meet the interests and needs of young children. Planning is topic based with a very good emphasis on developing children's skills. The use of the school's outdoor spaces, including a recently developed play area and a forest area, is an outstanding feature. Nursery and reception children enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities both indoors and outdoors. Planning is flexible and reviewed regularly, and with suitable adjustments made when necessary.
94. Detailed schemes of work and curriculum maps are in place for all subjects and the school is making good progress in adjusting the curriculum in line with National Curriculum 2008 and the Skills Framework. The school has an

appropriately adaptable approach to the curriculum to enable it to best meet the needs of pupils. For example, subjects such as design technology and music are often blocked in longer periods.

95. The development of pupils' basic and key skills is given a high priority in the school and this is reflected in a creative and innovative approach to planning the curriculum. Teachers ensure that pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their skills and to apply them in problem solving and collaborative working. Appropriate provision is made for pupils who require additional support for basic skills by using Learning Support Assistants to target specific groups and with programmes such as 'Catch Up' to support reading.
96. The range of extra-curricular activities, expanded in Autumn 2008, includes choir, orchestra, football, art, gardening and ICT. Joint working with partner schools in shared dance or arts festivals and participation in local events generates increased opportunities for pupils to develop their interpersonal skills. Opportunities to take the pupils off-site to locations of interest, outdoor activity centres, and places of worship or for field work are built into lesson planning and very effectively broaden and enrich the experiences offered to pupils.
97. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an outstanding feature of the school. Pupils' spiritual development is enhanced by the provision of very high quality collective worship that fully meets statutory requirements. Pupils play an active part in worship and are provided with opportunities to explore spiritual and cultural issues through a range of media such as song, poetry and dance. Collective worship is broadly Christian in character although appropriate links are made to other beliefs and religions to enhance pupils' understanding.
98. The quality of relationships in school plays an important role in the effective development of pupils' social and moral skills. Mealtimes are managed in a calm, orderly manner. However, KS2 pupils who bring a packed lunch do not have the facility to eat their meal at a table and this has an impact on the development of their social skills.
99. Pupils develop a very good understanding of the culture of Wales through well planned opportunities in the curriculum, particularly in history, geography and religious education. This is enhanced by visits to historical and other sites within the locality. Awareness of other cultures is developed through effective links with people overseas as well as through themes of study selected in music, art and religious education.
100. Parent helpers and other adults are plentiful and they support teachers by working with small groups in the lessons, or by listening to reading, and attend on a regular basis.
101. The headteacher and assistant headteacher are available at the start of the day to meet and greet parents and children on arrival. Regular consultation days and open mornings are held for parents. The school communicates

using newsletters and other notices and the majority of parents are content with the contact they have with the school. In the current term, e-mail has been introduced as another channel of communication for parents.

102. The school has good links with Cowbridge Comprehensive School. Pupils join the comprehensive school pupils for sports in the Summer Term and there is a joint orchestra which performs at local events. Opportunities are offered to Year 12 students to undertake work experience in the primary school. Other older pupils attend at various times to assist younger children with their learning.
103. Liaison for transition to the local comprehensive is very effective. There is good practice in transferring information and in co-operation between staff to share resources and approaches to teaching. The comprehensive school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) attends annual reviews of Year 6 pupils.
104. The school has an agreed policy for sex education that is delivered to Year 5 pupils with a focus on puberty and to Year 6 pupils within a context of relationships. Pupils in Year 5 value the fact that the programme is delivered in single sex groups. Each year parents are provided with an opportunity to view the material and to withdraw their children if they feel it is not appropriate.
105. The school makes good use of local employers and professional visitors such as police officers to develop work related education. There are good examples of practical activities in school which develop awareness of work. Pupils' management of selling their produce and of fund raising provides opportunities to develop entrepreneurial skills.
106. The school promotes bilingual competence although the impact of this is limited.
107. Y Bont Faen School is an inclusive school. All pupils are encouraged to value diversity and celebrate differences and the school has effective strategies in place to combat stereotyping. The school lays good foundations for its pupils to become lifelong learners through its strong culture of equal access to learning and promoting achievement.
108. The school has an Eco Committee which organises events and suggests ideas to improve sustainable development. Pupils are involved in recycling, composting and planting. Pupils' involvement with their partner school in Tanzania moves beyond being a charitable undertaking and informs their broader, global understanding. These are activities of an outstanding quality.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

109. The inspection team's findings match the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation report.
110. The overall quality of care, support and guidance provided for pupils is an outstanding feature. The school is a close community and welcoming to visitors. Its vision to value individuals and to promote circumstances... 'where co-operation and collaboration are evident in both learning and living', is effectively realised.
111. The needs of any pupils with physical or medical conditions, or additional learning needs, are understood and a co-ordinated effort is made by the school to secure appropriate provision. An outstanding feature of the Foundation Phase is the manner in which all children are cared for and supported by all practitioners. Each child is valued and treated with respect at all times.
112. Very good teacher-pupil relationships are a notable aspect of the school so that pupils feel safe and happy. Information on pupils is shared appropriately. Personal support and guidance for individual pupils is a strength of the school. Teachers know the pupils well and pupils feel confident that staff will listen to any problems they may have and deal with them quickly and sympathetically.
113. Staff work closely with health professionals and other outside agencies such as police liaison officers and the Local Authority's English as an Additional Language Support Service. The management of care arrangements and support and guidance for pupils is very effective.
114. The School Council, elected by secret ballot, meets requirements, is well organised and active in arranging events, and makes a positive contribution to school life. Pupils value their council and use it to bring their ideas and views to the attention of staff and as a conduit to express concerns and raise issues.
115. All pupils have access to the PSE programme and this is enhanced by the use of Circle Time.
116. Special induction days take place at every stage of transition, including pre-entry. Pupils are well supported when starting and settle quickly into school routines. In the pre-inspection meeting, parents praised the approachability of staff and the time and care invested to ensure that children at various stages are welcomed and able to settle into school life and routines. However, the school does not yet access sufficient information regarding children's knowledge and abilities on entry to the nursery in order to build on their previous experiences.
117. The importance of regular and punctual attendance is promoted to pupils and to parents. There are robust recording and monitoring systems. Contact with

- the parents of non-attenders is immediate and effective. The school complies with all the requirements of NAW Circular 47/06.
118. The Health and Safety Policy and arrangements for ensuring pupils' safety are known to staff and are effectively implemented. Accidents and injuries are recorded. The PSE curriculum addresses topics of health and well-being.
 119. There is a suitable Child Protection Policy in place that is based on the Local Authority model and of which all staff are aware. The assistant headteacher is the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection issues. She is suitably trained, and has established working partnerships with external agencies. She is supported in this role by the headteacher and there is also a named school governor to oversee the policy and practice. The school follows appropriate procedures for Criminal Records Bureau checks and for the supervision of additional adults.
 120. The SENCO is well established in her duties to support those with additional learning needs. The systems in place are embedded and well implemented. There is time allocated for this role discharged effectively in monitoring provision for those with additional learning needs and keeping records of different types of support for pupils (provision mapping) using the Local Authority model. This information is used to maintain a dialogue with class teachers regarding all additional needs including those of the more able.
 121. There is a range of methods, often including one-to-one teaching, deployed to support the additional needs of learners. IEPs are created to define and monitor the support. The school's Learning Support Assistants are central to the delivery of these programmes and make a significant and beneficial impact. The Catch Up programme in literacy is managed and delivered by a support assistant specialising in this work who makes an important contribution. Pupils with SEN make good progress.
 122. The school is committed to early identification of pupils with SEN and from the time that children start school there are processes for identification of concerns. Baseline assessment and other information are used to begin the tracking procedure that is sustained during the pupils' progress through school and built upon as a fuller understanding evolves. Appropriate standardised tests are used at various points to inform assessments and the IEPs.
 123. There are appropriate systems to review progress and parents receive extra written invitations to discussions as well as to the regular parent consultation meetings. The school's approaches meet the Wales 2002 revised Code of Practice and statutory requirements. Where pupils have physical disability or a statement of SEN the school takes care to engage them fully in school life as well as to meet identified needs.
 124. There is a designated governor for SEN whose support and involvement in the school is beneficial. The way in which the SENCO orchestrates the collaboration of others, including support staff, parents and older pupils, to help address challenges in learning is outstanding.

125. Parents and pupils confirm that pupils are happy to come to school and feel safe in the school environment and free from bullying. The School Council and all classes have contributed to the development of the behaviour and anti-bullying rules. The school liaises with the Local Authority specialist behaviour team when required and Individual Behaviour Plans (IBPs) have been constructed for pupils whose behaviour has the potential to disrupt. The school has had to make one exclusion (of three days) in the past year.
126. The school's equality ethos underpins all activities and staff within the school provide positive role models regarding gender stereotyping. The school has an effective policy for equal opportunities and race equality and there have been no reported incidences of racial abuse.
127. There is a comprehensive Disability Equality Scheme and an associated action plan showing how the school is going to address the identified issues; these fully meet statutory requirements. The school is sympathetic to the needs of individuals and ensures that no-one is disadvantaged on account of their disability.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

128. The findings of the inspection team do not match the school's self-evaluation of Grade 1 for this key question. This is because the inspection team identified shortcomings in how the full impact of the senior management team is sustained. In addition, the Governing Body's annual report to parents fails to conform to statutory guidelines. This is a key issue for action identified in the last inspection report (January 2003) in response to which insufficient progress has been made.
129. The headteacher provides effective leadership and has been instrumental in leading very many successful initiatives which are now embedded into practice. She has achieved a great deal in ensuring that pupils are enthusiastic, engage with learning and appreciate their school activities. All pupils feel valued and a strong ethos of equal opportunities exists.
130. There is a clear set of aims which is known and shared among all staff and there are consistent expectations from pupils by teachers and other adults. This shared vision and common purpose is reflected in the life and work of the school and all have opportunities to participate in taking it forward. Pupils in KS2 developed the *Siarter Y Plant* setting out the rights of pupils which is proudly displayed in school and included in the school prospectus. The motto for Y Bont Faen Primary School, 'Inspire to learn; inspire for life', reflects aspirations for children living in the 21st century. The motto was selected following a consultation exercise involving governors and parents and modified to reflect the WAG vision for children in Wales.
131. The headteacher is very ably supported by the assistant headteacher whose job is wide ranging and includes monitoring progress and helping to lead and manage as well as making an outstanding impact as SENCO. However, there is no set of appropriate responsibilities designated to, or adopted for, the role of deputy headteacher. Within the senior team this important key role is undeveloped and does not make positive impact on the central leadership tasks of raising standards.
132. Arrangements for the performance management of teaching staff are in place and meet statutory requirements. Personal and professional targets have been negotiated and agreed with the headteacher for staff with additional curricular responsibilities. As a result of this process staff have engaged in activities to support school initiatives and the assistant headteacher has enrolled on the National Programme for Qualification for Headship. This has had a beneficial impact and helps the school to continue to move forward.
133. The school sustains strong links with its partner school in Arusha, Tanzania. A range of beneficial partnerships have been created with other institutions.

These include UWIC, Swansea Institute and colleges in Bridgend, Barry and associations with a training institution in Switzerland. Feedback from partners is requested to inform and improve practice and has been very positive.

134. Close liaison and good partnership working exists between the school and its partner secondary school to ensure a smooth transition for pupils. The transition plan continues to be refined and further developments have been agreed in order to increase the ongoing benefit for Year 6 pupils. Transition links with local partners for children entering the Foundation Phase are not so well developed.
135. The school takes careful note of both local and national priorities. It has embraced the importance of a *Healthy Lifestyle, Cultural Diversity, Education for Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development* and the *Foundation Phase* approach. Plans for the delivery of the revised National Curriculum for 2008 and skills development are appropriately advanced. Bilingualism, however, is underdeveloped.
136. The Governing Body is very committed to the school. Members know the school and the community it serves very well and have directly involved themselves in many of the practices being undertaken at the school and attend conferences and training events. Governors have recently been involved in analysing responses from the parent questionnaires for improvement plans, and an awareness raising session about Foundation Phase has also informed decision making. From headteacher reports, staff and pupil presentations, governors build a good knowledge of the strengths and needs of the school together with the outcomes of the end of year data for KS1 and KS2.
137. Governors' involvement in setting and monitoring pupil targets, and the systematic evaluation of impact on pupils' standards of specific school improvement initiatives, are at an early stage of development.
138. The Governing Body does not meet the statutory requirement in relation to the Governing Body's annual report to parents. This was a key issue for action identified in the previous inspection report published in 2003.
139. The school's complaints policy is available and reference is made to this information in the school prospectus.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

140. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation of Grade 1 for this key question and place it at Grade 2. This is because the outstanding features required for the higher grading were not identified.

141. Staff gather evidence by examining pupils' work, speaking to pupils and in some instances from lesson observations. A range of assessment information is also used to consider outcomes and performance trends. All engaged in supporting learning in the school are given opportunities to contribute to the professional dialogue that informs the school's self-evaluation.
142. The headteacher monitors lessons and reviews planning in order to make judgements about standards throughout the school and subject leaders also contribute to these processes. Their patterns of involvement are inconsistent, however, and there is little liaison between subject leaders and Foundation Phase practitioners.
143. The views of parents, governors and pupils are sought through discussion and also by using questionnaires. Issues that have been identified in questionnaires from parents are included for positive action in development plans. Questionnaires and the views of the School Council are also used to allow pupils to contribute to plans for improvement.
144. The Governing Body works effectively with the headteacher and other staff in the process of self-evaluation and is committed to the activity. Governors discuss, and contribute to, the self-evaluation report as it evolves before giving approval. Most leaders of learning have some involvement in monitoring progress in meeting school improvement targets but the regular, systematic role of managers in overseeing and reporting back to governors is not clearly defined.
145. The self-evaluation report is a thorough and detailed document. Although the inspection team disagreed with the school's application of grades and awarded lower ones in five of the seven key questions, this does not detract from the report's fundamental value in correctly identifying strengths and areas for development. The findings from the school's self-evaluation activities usefully identify targets for development which are prioritised and appear in the SDP. The evaluation and planning activities succeed in setting out where objectives have been met and where the next steps of improvement activity need to occur.
146. The SDP sets appropriately challenging targets. These are focused on specific areas of pupils' attainment, prioritising changes to teaching approaches and improving the learning environment. Timescales are realistic and proposed staffing and budget requirements are allocated. Overall the school progresses well in delivering improvements and maintaining good standards.
147. Significant improvements have been achieved in response to the key issues relating to standards of teaching and learning raised in the last inspection.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

148. The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's self-evaluation of Grade 1 for this key question and place it at Grade 2. This is because the outstanding features required for the higher grading were not identified.
149. The school has a sufficient number of teachers who are suitably qualified. They have appropriate experience to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered. The school has targeted staffing as a priority and hence pupil-teacher ratios are good.
150. Teaching assistants, especially those in the Foundation Phase, provide very high quality support and are used effectively. All support staff have job descriptions. They are involved in planning and feel that they are valued as important team members.
151. The school secretary is very committed to the school. She ensures that the daily running of the school is effective. Along with the headteacher, she is responsible for the efficient management of the school budget on a day-to-day basis.
152. The school has sufficient resources of a good quality to meet the needs of all curriculum areas. Resources are stored appropriately and are generally accessible to pupils. The school has successfully addressed an issue from the previous inspection regarding the lack of books. This is now a strength of the school. Almost all classes have interactive whiteboards and the school has recently purchased twenty mini laptops to go alongside the older laptops that are used by all classes. There are no budgetary plans in place for the replacement of these laptops.
153. The environment is bright and stimulating and is an effective setting for good learning and teaching. Good quality displays consist of an appropriate balance of pupils' work and of those that support learning. Class rules are prominently displayed in each classroom.
154. In the Foundation Phase resources are plentiful, age appropriate and of a very high quality. Classrooms are carefully laid out, bright, stimulating and cosy, which contributes to the standards and progress children achieve. Some areas of the school, however, are rather cramped and noisy and this can have an impact on learning.
155. The caretaker works conscientiously on behalf of the school and together with the cleaning staff ensures that the school is clean, tidy and well-maintained.
156. The outdoor area creates a spacious and stimulating environment. The hard play area is of sufficient size and good use is made of the grassed area for activities such as mountain biking and cross-country running.

157. The Foundation Phase outdoor area has been fully refurbished and now provides an exciting place for children to play and learn. The school also makes effective use of an all-weather pitch for activities both within the curriculum and for extra-curricular activities. Foundation Phase children also make use of a forest area as part of their normal learning environment.
158. The school makes economic and efficient use of available resources. It identifies the costs of priorities for development but there are no formal mechanisms for evaluating the impact of spending. The headteacher has overall responsibility for the budget and informs the finance sub-committee on a regular basis. The committee, however, does not have a sufficient strategic overview of budgeting matters at this time.
159. Staff are deployed efficiently and use is made of curriculum expertise which has an impact on standards of achievement. The leadership potential of some staff, however, has not yet been developed. Systems for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) are well established and equitably carried out. The school is beginning to evaluate the impact of PPA although this is at an early stage of development.
160. The focus for continuing professional development (CPD) for all staff over the last few years has been Assessment for Learning. Although this has had an impact on learning across the school, some teachers indicate that they have lacked training in updating their knowledge and skills in their curriculum areas of responsibility. Staff feed back to each other following training but there are no formal procedures in place to evaluate the impact of CPD.
161. The SDP is a fully costed document and funding is linked to identified priorities.
162. In the light of the standards achieved and the quality of learning experiences provided for the pupils, the school achieves good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Foundation Phase

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

163. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children are making good progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes.
164. A Foundation Phase approach to learning has been adopted in both the nursery and reception classes.

Language, Literacy and Communication Skills

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

165. Both younger and older children listen well at story time and when adults are speaking directly to them. They are able to sit quietly and respond appropriately to questions, which indicates their interest and understanding. All are able to respond to the signal for tidy-up sessions even when they are engaged and concentrating on their own tasks. This demonstrates very good listening skills. Children using the computers respond well to instructions and achieve good standards.
166. The majority speak clearly and have a genuine desire to communicate with others. Many engage in sustained dialogue demonstrating maturity and a good use of vocabulary. A few children are very keen to talk to the visitor in their class.
167. Children from the reception class perform extremely well in front of the whole school for the collective worship. They are able to speak in unison, remember their words for the lengthy presentation and act out the story of Mr. Forgetful extremely competently for the large audience.
168. Children are developing their reading skills appropriately. When entering the classrooms at the start of the day, all are able to read and select their own name from amongst others and place it on the registration tree in the nursery and on the appropriate board in the reception class. Younger children enjoy looking at books and become engrossed in the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears. They are familiar with the highlights of the story and know the correct sequence of events. The older children are further developing their reading ability through activities linked to the topic of Jack and the Beanstalk. They make their own story booklets and are able to dictate a sentence to support their illustrations. They make suitable progress with the school phonics system. Many are able to read several

key words from the reading scheme. They know that print carries meaning, that books are enjoyable and that they contain information as well as stories.

169. Those children engaged in a creative activity linked to a poem show a love of special words and are beginning to use their own descriptive words thoughtfully. They are able to make class poems together and use these as a further stimulus for role play, drama and movement activities. The designated role play areas provide opportunities for children to practise and improve their speaking and listening, undertake conversations together and expand their vocabulary.
170. Children's writing skills are good. The plentiful opportunities for children to use their emergent writing enable them to practise mark making using a wide variety of media. They are beginning to form lines, zigzags and curves on paper and in shaving foam. A few already attempt to write some letters from their own name. Children in reception class have benefited from earlier experiences and are beginning to over-write with greater care and control to form letters correctly; many write their names on their own pieces of work. They write for a variety of purposes including making lists and signing cards.

Shortcomings

171. There are no important shortcomings.

Personal and Social Development, Well-being and Cultural Diversity

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

172. All children demonstrate high levels of independence when using both the indoor and outdoor environments. They are able to put on their own coats and many are able to put on their wellingtons in preparation for the expedition to the forest area for the bear hunt. Children also show their independence when moving around the classroom, selecting equipment, using resources and tidying up after themselves.
173. Children use the toilet independently and are able to take care of their personal needs as appropriate. They comply with the hand washing routines and understand the importance of hygiene.
174. Children are developing their social skills and are able to play together successfully. They co-operate well, share resources and wait patiently for their turn when playing games. Their behaviour is very good, they demonstrate care and support each other where necessary. Relationships are very good. They are able to express their feelings confidently and relate well to all adults and other children in the group.

175. All children show respect for the environment and know that living things, including animals and plants, need to be looked after and treated with care.
176. Children in both classes show great enthusiasm for their learning and engage fully in the planned activities and others that are on offer during the day as part of the continuous provision. The majority are able to sustain concentration in line with their stage of development and many concentrate for much longer periods of time. They experiment confidently with new learning experiences including ICT resources such as the interactive whiteboard, laptop, camera and *digi-blu* video.
177. They enjoy their healthy snack, eat and drink with care and understand that fruit and milk are good for them and help them to grow strong and keep healthy. Routines are understood by all; they follow rules, respect the equipment and are developing a sense of right and wrong and the consequences. Their self-discipline is developing well as they begin to take control of their actions.
178. Most children in the reception class know that they are Welsh, live in Wales and that their flag has a dragon.
179. All children are happy to come to school. They engage willingly in the self-registration activity at the start of the day and are delighted to see their friends.

Shortcomings

180. There are no important shortcomings.

Mathematical Development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

181. Most children in the nursery are building their mathematical vocabulary and their understanding of mathematical concepts. They are able to respond appropriately when talking about number, shape or size. They are beginning to count correctly up to five. A few count aloud and can move objects to touch and count methodically. Nursery children count to three in Welsh when counting the three bears.
182. Nursery children are able to create patterns when using peg boards and can continue a sequence pattern when making the wallpaper for Baby Bear's bedroom. A few more able children successfully attempt to create a three colour repeat pattern.

183. Children in both classes demonstrate a good understanding of shape. They are able to sort objects according to size appropriately. Activities linked to the three bears, the giant and the postman's letters reinforce this concept. Children understand small, big, middle size, medium and large.
184. Many have learnt to identify and label simple 2D shapes in the nursery. Older children can find and name some of the more common 3D shapes. They use large wooden boxes outdoors and refer to them by size and shape during their play.
185. Their number skills are good and they continue to develop. Many children recognise numerals to ten and a few children count further. Many are able to make correct numerical sets for a given number. The group engaged in posting letters to numbered houses when outdoors show enthusiasm for the task, and succeed in locating the correct letter to the house number. They are able to check their delivery and one child is able to spot an error and explain the reason and the relationship between the numbers 6 and 9.
186. Many children are beginning to make comparisons in length and describe full and empty containers when playing in the sand and water trays.
187. Children enjoy using the computer and interactive whiteboard to play pattern and number games and practise their skills and reinforce their knowledge. This further enhances their mathematical development.
188. In reception, the small group involved in planting magic beans for the beanstalk suggest a ruler as a tool to measure the depth of the liquid in the container as specified in the written instructions. They are then able to find the number 3 on the ruler to measure 3 centimetres.

Shortcomings

189. There are no important shortcomings.

Welsh Language Development

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

190. Children in nursery join in with the Welsh songs at 'gather together' time and respond to 'Beth sydd yn y bocsy?' to discover the bears hiding inside. They are developing their counting skills in Welsh and are able to count to three correctly.
191. Children in reception react appropriately to the familiar Welsh phrases used by the adults. They show that they can understand basic instructions and respond to 'Barod' by answering 'Barod' before leaving the room to go outside. They are able to describe the weather by repeating the correct

phrase and are beginning to show a greater understanding of these familiar phrases. Their pronunciation is generally accurate. They are able to understand more words than they can speak.

Shortcomings

192. Children do not use sufficient Welsh phrases to practise the language patterns to develop further their bilingual skills.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

193. The carefully planned activities, 'gather together' occasions, registration periods, excursions to the forest area and the locality, provide plentiful experiences through which children effectively increase their knowledge and understanding of the world.
194. Children are able to talk about the seasons and provide explanations for the leaves on the ground. They are able to label parts of a tree, discuss why the grass is wet and the ground is muddy. They feel the wind on their faces, enjoy the experience and can discuss the type of weather when asked.
195. Children in reception class can recite the days of the week in the correct order and many are able to discuss their birthday date, the month and how old they are. They are beginning to show a greater awareness of time, the importance of routines during the day and the links to the clock and telling the time.
196. Many children engaged in the feely bag game can match the objects by touch. They are able to describe the textures and identify which objects are rough, smooth, soft, slippery or hard.
197. As they progress through the Foundation Phase children are further developing their desire to find out more. They enjoy investigating and experimenting and seeing changes occur. A few are able to share their cookery experiences and fully describe the processes, steps and stages undertaken. They know that an oven can be too hot and burn the food.
198. Visits to the local environment and visitors to the school assist the children in developing an improved knowledge of their locality. Many know their own address and that Cowbridge is a town with shops.
199. Outdoor experiences for the under-fives broaden their knowledge of plants and how things grow. They have good knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Shortcomings

200. There are no important shortcomings.

Physical Development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

201. Children from an early age are learning to balance carefully, climb obstacles, co-ordinate their larger movements and control their bodies to stop and start on command. They are able to ride bikes, pedal vehicles and run freely, change direction and avoid collisions.
202. They take full advantage of the outdoor learning environment to practise and develop their physical skills and engage in adventurous play. They have good control of their bodies.
203. Children in reception are able to talk about the importance of health, exercise and undertaking warm up activities. The majority describe the effect on their bodies and know that their breathing gets faster and their heart beats quicker following exercise.
204. All children are able to line up quickly to use the track at the beginning of the physical education session. They play follow the leader well and are able to jump, bounce and jog skilfully. Many are able to hop successfully. They explain how to throw and catch a ball or the quoits and understand the need for correct body positioning and the importance of watching carefully to follow the moving object. They demonstrate an increasing awareness of the space around them.
205. During their time in the Foundation Phase the majority of children develop appropriate manipulative skills in line with their stage of development. They use a wide range of tools and equipment with increasing ability and confidence. Their control of paintbrushes, crayons, pencils and scissors is very good. Many are able to cut on the line with a fair degree of accuracy when cutting their own hand shape for a mathematical activity.
206. Those using the computer demonstrate good control when moving the mouse.

Shortcomings

207. Many reception class children do not use a knife and fork correctly during the school lunch time.

Creative development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

208. All children paint enthusiastically, experiment with colour and make very good progress in developing their ability to represent people and other objects when painting. They are able to mix and blend colours and enjoy the process. They show progress by painting pictures which include greater detail and by using the area and size of paper far more effectively.
209. Both classes provide plentiful opportunities for children to develop their creative skills by making pictures from a wide range of collage materials. Children create very good imaginative pictures and decorate these enthusiastically with glitter to enhance the finished product.
210. The focused activity to make pictures of the family of giants, undertaken as a direct response to a carefully selected poem, enable children to make choices and select appropriate resources from the varied selection. All the children involved describe their work clearly and give reasons for their carefully and thoughtfully selected materials. They take great care and pay close attention to detail. They are able to evaluate the finished product effectively and show great pleasure at the end result.
211. The use of mud to make bears in the forest area enables children to make a model using a very different medium. They create the features by using natural forest materials for the eyes, ears, nose and mouth. The variety of bears on the tree trunks are of a good standard and demonstrate the children's creativity.
212. The children demonstrate good musical skills. All join in readily with singing and musical activities. They march and sing on the way to the bear hunt, repeatedly singing the special song until they arrive at the forest. They keep good timing, sing in tune and know a wide range of songs. They enjoy making different sounds when using the excellent range of natural objects in the nursery yard.
213. When modelling, children skilfully use a variety of different tools, a rolling pin and cutters to create a range of models whilst experimenting with shape and form. They draw pictures using the blackboard or when seated at the drawing table. They are given the choice to take these pictures home or put them up for display in the writing area. Many like to display their work for others to see and admire.
214. The quality of children's role play is very good. They enjoy pretending to be Goldilocks or the bears in the home corner. They like to dress up and look in the mirror. They use the castle role-play area to imagine living with the

giant. When outside, they pretend to be pirates stranded on a desert island or drivers of vehicles going on long journeys.

Shortcomings

215. There are no important shortcomings.

Mathematics

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

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

Good features

216. Pupils in both key stages are developing an awareness of appropriate mental strategies. They are able to apply these skills in a range of contexts and investigations, including real life situations.
217. Pupils in KS1 can describe and extend simple number sequences, including odd and even numbers, and can count on and back in ones and tens from any two-digit number.
218. The majority of pupils understand that subtraction is the inverse of addition and know the addition and subtraction facts for numbers up to 10. More able pupils know these facts up to 30. They use the knowledge that addition can be done in any order to do mental calculations more efficiently.
219. Most pupils can estimate and compare lengths and can use standard and non-standard measures to make equidistant patterns. They use the language of measuring with confidence and can draw a line using a ruler to the nearest centimetre.
220. They use the mathematical names for common 2D and 3D shapes and can describe some of their properties.
221. Most younger KS2 pupils can recognise simple square numbers and can find square numbers up to 10×10 .
222. The majority of pupils can round any positive whole number less than 1000 to the nearest 10 or 100. Most can recognise simple patterns on a 100 square and can explain their reasons for choosing a particular pattern.
223. Most can recognise simple fractions that are part of a whole and a few are able to find equivalent parts of simple fractions.
224. The majority of pupils know by heart facts for the 2, 3, 5 and 10 multiplication tables.

- 225. They can classify 2D and 3D shapes using such criteria as number of right angles and whether or not they are regular and can construct a 3D shape from its net. They can identify lines of symmetry in simple shapes.
- 226. Older KS2 pupils are aware that area is measured in square centimetres. They know how to measure the area of an irregular shape by counting squares and most pupils are able to explain why this gives only an approximate answer. Pupils understand the benefit of estimating before working out a more accurate answer.
- 227. They are developing a good understanding of mental calculation methods and are able to talk about and explain the strategies they have used. They use inverse operations to check that an answer is correct.
- 228. Pupils can order a set of decimals between 0 and 1. They recognise square numbers up to 100 and understand that 5^2 is 25 and that 5 is the square root of 25. They can convert a simple fraction into a decimal.
- 229. They are able to use a non-standard multiplication method to multiply complex decimals as part of a problem solving strategy to find the square root of a number.
- 230. They have used internet research to investigate percentages in real-life situations and are able to represent this information using a mind map.

Shortcomings

- 231. A few pupils are unsure of their multiplication facts, and this has an impact on the rest of their calculating ability.

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

- 232. KS1 pupils competently use the mouse or laptop touchpads to control the screen cursor to make selections and respond to program instructions. They are familiar with the use of a range of icons to manipulate and develop their work.
- 233. They can operate the computer keyboard confidently as they develop their word processing skills. With support they are able to save and retrieve work on the network.
- 234. Pupils develop graphic images by selecting colours and using appropriate painting tools such as pens, flood fill, spray and eraser.

235. Pupils in KS2 communicate information effectively using text, graphs and images. They use a word processor purposefully when experimenting with different page layouts and applying various fonts, borders and backgrounds.
236. Upper KS2 pupils produce effective presentations linked with areas of study in other subjects and apply a range of animation and transition effects successfully, adding impact to their work.
237. Lower KS2 pupils ably navigate chosen websites using icons and menus to engage in specific activities or to discover relevant information. Older pupils make good use of the internet to research for information about their areas of study and to find resources, such as images, to enhance their own work. They demonstrate confidence in inserting, resizing, rotating and positioning graphics within their own documents and presentations.
238. Lower KS2 pupils can successfully use branching databases to search for and identify items in a collection.
239. Pupils confidently enter data into tables and produce graphs and charts to support their studies in other areas of the curriculum. Older pupils are able to sort data in spreadsheets and to apply basic mathematical functions, such as adding a list of numbers to calculate total cost either by entering a formula or by using automated features.
240. Pupils can successfully explore designs and patterns using a graphics package or object-based drawing program.

Shortcomings

241. Pupils' understanding of how to interrogate databases and to interpret results is underdeveloped.

Design Technology

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

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

242. Overall the school has made significant progress in improving standards since the last inspection.

Good features

243. Pupils in both key stages use a variety of materials to make a range of products. They are aware of health and safety considerations and the need for food hygiene. They plan their work effectively and evaluate their products both orally and in writing.

244. Younger pupils in KS1 are able to identify books with different moving parts, for example pivots and tabs. They can choose the appropriate equipment needed for a task and are able to produce a design for a moving picture and can construct a variety of ways of making it.
245. Most are aware of appropriate ways to join different materials and can apply this knowledge to make their product.
246. Most use simple programmable equipment to carry out a pre-described task.
247. Older KS1 pupils design and make a bridge using a variety of materials. They know how to make materials like paper stronger by methods such as rolling and folding and can explain their reasons for their choice of material.
248. As part of a challenge to make a dress for a witch, they have explored different ways to join material together, designed repeating patterns on paper and a computer and selected appropriate materials for the task.
249. Younger KS2 pupils are able to make a simple frame to hold a photograph. They can design a method for allowing their frame to stand independently and a minority can say how their frame could be improved. They are aware that design and technology can be used to solve problems. They have been involved in a mini enterprise scheme to design a dessert for a café. They use free resources such as blackberries and windfall apples and sell their produce to parents in the café.
250. As part of a community based project, younger KS2 pupils have used questionnaires to determine the design criteria for making a sandwich for KS1 pupils. They have linked with a local sandwich bar to investigate existing products and are aware of the need to design the product initially. They explain the whole design process and are aware of the need to evaluate their product against the design criteria and that different customers may want different outcomes. They are also aware of the need to cost ingredients accurately in order to achieve a profit.
251. Older KS2 pupils are able to produce a design for a portable light source. They are aware of the difference between a conductor and an insulator and the impact that will have on their design.
252. They plan and carry out the preparation of a fruit salad as part of a healthy eating focus. They are able to investigate existing products, plan and design their own fruit salad making appropriate choices and evaluate their finished work and suggest improvements.
253. They are beginning to integrate simple control mechanisms into their designs, such as a pressure pad linked to a light as part of a burglar alarm system.

Shortcomings

254. Pupils do not have sufficient knowledge of control systems.

Geography

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

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

Good features

255. In KS1, pupils have a good knowledge of the features of the school. They can describe areas and locations of the site, make simple plans showing buildings and different types of spaces and draw a route for others to follow. The majority can use aerial photographs to consider different types of locations and correctly name features using basic geographical terms.
256. Pupils in KS1 know the characteristics of their town and surroundings, name places nearby and can describe correctly places they have visited and different jobs people do. They also have awareness of, and can describe, different types of weather and how these change people's behaviour in different places.
257. In lower KS2, pupils understand why it is useful to conduct a survey of all the different shops in the Cowbridge shopping area, and can participate effectively. They identify suitable questions to ask and correctly record their findings using a table. Many can explain why it is of value to group the data in different ways in order to demonstrate different aspects of things they have discovered.
258. KS2 pupils can identify key cities and home countries from maps of the UK and Europe in their own work folders. As they progress through KS2, pupils' mapping skills develop progressively and they move from using four to six figure grid references. In upper KS2, most are confident in their use of an Ordnance Survey map and many can identify the quickest route from one point to another. They can use the scale accurately to calculate distances, use the key to identify landmarks and present this information as a written set of directions.
259. From their field work visits to Cardiff Bay, pupils in KS2 can describe how development in a city area follows patterns that differ from their own and more rural areas. Older and more able pupils can speculate as to what types of businesses are drawn there and why. They propose imagined business ideas and plans and know that different types of buildings and businesses may not be permitted everywhere.
260. Pupils in both key stages, according to age and ability, demonstrate appropriate awareness of environmental issues and the need to recycle. Older and more able pupils are developing an understanding of the implications of global warming.

Shortcomings

261. There are no significant shortcomings.

Music

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

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

Good features

262. In both key stages almost all pupils sing in tune, with energy and enthusiasm. They know a range of songs in English and in Welsh. They display good diction, respond appropriately to Kodaly hand signs and are aware of change of dynamics. In KS2, pupils sing well in two or three parts working to control their breathing to best effect.
263. In KS1, pupils maintain a good rhythm and correctly clap beats in response to directions from their teacher. All make choices about different sounds they wish to make using tuned and untuned instruments to create incidental music for a story. They take turns to join in at appropriate times as the story is read aloud and join in discussions about what works well.
264. Pupils in KS1 have a developing awareness of musical terms. They describe which sounds are high pitched and which are low, which are loud or quiet, when experimenting with musical instruments they have made.
265. After studying the Caribbean and listening to its music, pupils in KS2 compose their own pieces. They make effective use of their voices and various instruments to recreate the style and mood they have experienced. Pupils in both key stages devise their own scores using various symbols to record the type of sounds and ways of playing they wish to use.
266. In KS2, after listening to music many pupils can compare different pieces, responding appropriately to questions about timbre and pace when working with partners and in teacher-led discussion.
267. Pupils who have benefited from tuition in instruments such as the flute, guitar or violin contribute to performances with their classmates. Most can participate well using voice or other instruments to build and experiment with the bigger, richer sound created together.

Shortcomings

268. A minority of KS2 pupils demonstrate limited perception when listening to music and are unable make appropriate comments about what they have heard.

School's response to the inspection

Y Bont Faen School is pleased to note from its inspection report that it is a good school with some outstanding features and that it is successfully achieving its vision. The inspection findings recognise that we have maintained good quality provision since our last inspection and improved standards in key skills, assessment, design technology, and for children under five. We are delighted that inspectors found that pupils exhibit outstanding progress in their spiritual, moral and social development and that they have positive attitudes towards, and are enthusiastic about, their learning.

The care and support systems we have in place, underpinning our curricular provision, are recognised as an outstanding feature of our school and are due to the dedication, skills and talents of teachers and support staff. Very good pupil-teacher relationships, and the personal support and guidance for individual pupils, are recognised as strengths of our school.

We are encouraged to note that inspectors feel we are making good progress in moving towards the revised National Curriculum 2008 and that the curriculum in the Foundation Phase meets the needs and interests of young children. But most importantly, the inspection report makes clear the elements that make our school what it is.

An action plan will be put in place to respond to the recommendations in the report and school staff and governors will address these issues as a matter of urgency.

In order to raise standards the Governing Body will ensure:

- that leadership and management responsibilities, at all levels, are appropriately defined and effectively distributed to support the raising of standards;
- systematic monitoring of teaching and learning is developed so that the best practice is spread throughout the school;
- pupils' standards in bilingual skills are improved;
- the Governing Body's annual report to parents conforms with statutory requirements.

A copy of the school's action plan in response to the inspection recommendations will be sent to parents. The governors' annual report to parents will report on the progress we are making in meeting the inspection recommendations.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Y Bont Faen Primary
School type	Primary inc Foundation Phase
Age-range of pupils	3-11
Address of school	Borough Close Cowbridge Vale of Glamorgan
Postcode	CF71 7BN
Telephone number	01446 772374
Headteacher	Susan Dodd
Date of appointment	January 1994
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Julie Williams
Registered inspector	Gregory Owens
Dates of inspection	10 th November to 12 th November 2008

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	12.5	30	25	27	28	28	30	35	215.5

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	12	1	13

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	17:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	8:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	n/a
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	25
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1.5:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Autumn 2007	87%	93%	95%
Spring 2008	91%	95%	93.1%
Summer 2008	87.6%	94.4%	94.8%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	4%
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 2008			Number of pupils in Y2:					25
Percentage of pupils at each level								
			D	W	1	2	3	
English:	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	4	65	31	
		National	0.2	3.5	13.8	63.0	19.4	
En: reading	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	4	42	54	
		National	0.2	4.1	14.9	55.2	25.5	
En: writing	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	4	77	19	
		National	0.2	4.8	15.9	67.8	11.3	
En: speaking and listening	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	4	69	27	
		National	0.2	2.4	10.7	62.8	23.8	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	4	50	46	
		National	0.2	2.0	10.9	65.2	21.6	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	4	34	62	
		National	0.2	1.6	8.5	66.3	23.4	

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	96%	In Wales	80.7%

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

National Curriculum Assessment Results
End of key stage 2:

National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2008			Number of pupils in Y6					31	
Percentage of pupils at each level									
			D	W	1	2	3	4	5
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	10	52	37
		National	0.2	0.5	0.6	3.1	15.6	51.3	28.5
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	10	52	37
		National	0.2	0.5	0.6	2.7	14.7	51.4	29.9
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	6	52	40
		National	0.2	0.5	0.5	1.8	11.4	53.9	31.7

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science, and either English or Welsh (first language) by teacher assessment			
In the school	87%	In Wales	76%

- 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

Five inspectors spent a total of 10 inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection. During this time they visited:

- 39 lessons or part lessons;
- all classes;
- acts of collective worship (as observers only);
- extra-curricular activities;
- arrivals, departures, lunchtimes and playtimes.

They also conducted 'listening to learners' activities in which conversations were held with individuals and groups of pupils about their past and present activities and in which their reading was considered.

Members of the inspection team had meetings and discussions with:

- staff, governors, Local Authority representatives and parents before the inspection began;
- senior managers, governors, teachers, support and administrative staff and groups of pupils during the inspection.

The team also considered:

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

In addition the headteacher, in the role of nominee, attended and contributed to all inspection team meetings before and during the inspection.

The inspection team held post inspection meetings with the staff and governors.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Gregory Owens Registered Inspector	KQ 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 SEN, geography and music
Liz Heaven Lay Inspector	KQ 2, 3 and 4
Brenda Morgan Team Inspector	KQ 1, 2, 4 and 5 Foundation Phase
David Penny Jones Team Inspector	KQ 1, 2, 3 Bilingualism and ICT
Mike Southcoat Team Inspector	KQ 1, 2, 4 and 7 Mathematics and design technology

The Contractor:

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Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the pupils of the school, all staff, headteacher, governors and other members of the school community for their welcome and co-operation throughout the inspection.