Inspection under Section 10 of the
Schools Inspections Act 1996

Ty Gwyn Special School
Ty Gwyn Road
Penylan
Cardiff
CF23 5JG

School Number: 6817011

Date of Inspection: 8 May 2006

by

Eric Norman Peagam
14943

Date of Publication: 10 July 2006

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* primary schools;
* secondary schools;
* special schools;
* pupil referral units;
* independent schools;
* further education;
* adult and community-based learning;
* youth support services;
* LEAs;
* teacher education and training;
* work-based learning;
* careers companies; and
* the education, guidance and training elements of Jobcentre Plus.

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

The inspection of Ty Gwyn Special School took place between 08/05/06 and 11/05/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Eric Norman Peagam 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 special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a full 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:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>Y 1</th>
<th>Y 2</th>
<th>Y 3</th>
<th>Y 4</th>
<th>Y 5</th>
<th>Y 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ages</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>8-9</td>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>10-11</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Secondary phase:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Y 7</th>
<th>Y 8</th>
<th>Y 9</th>
<th>Y 10</th>
<th>Y 11</th>
<th>Y 12</th>
<th>Y 13</th>
<th>Y 14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ages</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>13-14</td>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>15-16</td>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>17-18</td>
<td>18-19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key stage 1</th>
<th>Year 1 and Year 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key stage 2</td>
<td>Year 3 to Year 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key stage 3</td>
<td>Year 7 to Year 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key stage 4</td>
<td>Year 10 and Year 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents</td>
<td>Page</td>
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<td>------</td>
</tr>
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<td>Context</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Summary</td>
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<td>Recommendations</td>
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<td>Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quality of education and training</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 2: How effective are teaching,</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>training and assessment?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 3: How well do the learning</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>experiences meet the needs and interests of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learners and the wider community?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Question 4: How well are learners cared</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for, guided and supported?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership and management</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Question 5: How effective are leadership</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and strategic management?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Question 6: How well do leaders and</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>managers evaluate and improve quality and</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>standards?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and managers in using resources?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards achieved in subjects and areas of</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5s</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh second language</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design technology</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern foreign languages</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Social and Health Education</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious education (including religious</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>studies)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School's response to the inspection</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Basic information about the school</td>
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<td>2 School data and indicators</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 National Curriculum assessments results</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Evidence base of the inspection</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Composition and responsibilities of the</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inspection team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The nature of the provider

1. Ty Gwyn School is a day special school, located in the outskirts of Cardiff, providing education for 86 boys and girls aged from three to 19. The school serves the whole of the Cardiff LEA area, and pupils are drawn from across the city. All pupils have special educational needs (SEN) and a majority are identified as having profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). All pupils have statements of SEN that include disapplication from the requirement to learn Welsh or a modern foreign language, or to be subject to national assessment or testing at the end of each key stage.

2. There is a very limited range of ability on intake; pupils come from a range of socio-economic backgrounds but over two-fifths are entitled to free school meals, which is considerably above the average for the county. Most pupils’ home language is English, although a third of pupils have minority ethnic heritage. Two-thirds of the pupils are boys.

3. Pupils are taught in 12 classes, based on key stages, but with parallel classes for pupils with challenging behaviour related to autistic spectrum disorder, who are taught by teachers specially trained in appropriate techniques for the teaching of children with communication handicaps (TEACCH). Pupils at Key Stage 1 (KS1) are taught using the early years curriculum as this is more appropriate to their needs.

4. Recent developments include:
   - the appointment of the current headteacher (September 2005) and restructuring of the school leadership team (SLT);
   - establishment of provision for hearing-impaired pupils;
   - extended provision for youngsters with challenging behaviour; and
   - establishment of nursery provision at the beginning of the spring term 2006.

5. The school was previously inspected in June 2000 when provision was found to be good with some shortcomings including unsatisfactory standards of achievement in physical education. The actual issues identified for improvement were:
   - work together with appropriate external partners to:
   - ensure pupils with challenging behaviour have adequate support, and
   - improve accommodation so that it is more suited to the current school population;
   - improve the quality of provision for pupils under five;
   - develop a scheme of work for physical education and improve the guidance given to teachers by the co-ordinator;
   - develop further opportunities to reinforce pupils’ numeracy and information technology (IT) skills across the curriculum; and
• build on the good teaching already in school to develop further strategies to ensure that all the least able pupils who are integrated with more able pupils are involved fully in lessons.

The school’s priorities and targets

6. Ty Gwyn has a simple, clear statement of vision emphasising the right of every pupil to develop fully in a context where they can be happy, supported and challenged, receiving a high quality education and where everyone is valued. This supports a set of more detailed aims that explain how the vision statement is to be addressed.

7. The current school improvement plan (SIP) identifies a range of areas for maintenance and improvement, setting as priorities:
   • tracking the cross-curricular delivery of key skills;
   • ensuring that all schemes of work are reviewed and implemented;
   • raising standards in numeracy and literacy throughout the school;
   • implementing the new information and communications technology (ICT) development plan;
   • developing the library as a learning resource area;
   • fully implementing performance management;
   • review of health and safety and race equality policy and practice; and
   • extending training in TEACCH and Team Teach approaches to behaviour management.

Summary

8. Ty Gwyn is an effective school with many strengths and few shortcomings. Under the leadership of the new headteacher and SLT, the school is moving forward very well and the needs of pupils are being met well. Where there are shortcomings, the most important are beyond the control of the school, but the school is moving well to address those over which it has control.

Table of grades awarded

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

Subjects and/or Areas of Learning for Under-fives

9. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children’s Learning. The standards achieved in each area are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Learning</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language, literacy and communication</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and social development</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematical development</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of the world</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative development</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical development</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades for standards in subjects inspected

10. In Key Stages 1 to 4 and at Post-16, the standards of achievement are good overall. Individual subject grades are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspection Area</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 5s</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh second language</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information technology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design technology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern foreign languages</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Because of the pupils’ special needs, there are no benchmarks for comparison with other schools and it is not appropriate to set overall targets for attainment. However, the school sets and generally meets targets for individual pupils. These targets are shared with parents and, where appropriate, pupils, and play an appropriate part in planning.

12. Many pupils do not use language to communicate, but to the extent that they do, standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and the use of numeracy across the curriculum, are good. In using ICT, pupils demonstrate variable standards, but overall the shortcomings are outweighed by the strengths. Creative development and problem-solving skills are good and, as far as is possible, pupils show understanding of the issues involved in sustainable development and healthy living. Given the language difficulties of most pupils, it is not appropriate to judge their bilingual skills.

13. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans (IEPs). Boys and girls achieve equally well and there are no identifiable groups of pupils who achieve differently from their peers.
14. Development of personal, social and learning skills is a particularly strong area of the school. Standards in personal, social and health education (PSHE) are good overall with outstanding features. Pupils who are capable of relating to other people show positive attitudes to others and behave responsibly when given the opportunity. They have a positive view of diversity and show respect and tolerance for those who are different in any way. Most pupils attend regularly and arrive punctually; any unauthorised absence is generally a result of parents not informing the school of reasons for absence.

**The quality of education and training**

15. The percentage of lessons awarded each grade for teaching is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade 2</th>
<th>Grade 3</th>
<th>Grade 4</th>
<th>Grade 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. The percentage of good (graded 2) and very good (graded 1) lessons is well above the Welsh average. At times, there are outstanding features and even in those lessons where teaching falls below the overall high standard, good features outweigh shortcomings.

17. The best features of teaching are the effective teamwork between teachers and support staff, the good knowledge staff have of the needs of individual pupils and the very high quality of relationships in classes. Staff balance pupils’ needs for successful outcomes with the need to ensure that they participate as fully as possible and classroom management, especially for those pupils in TEACCH classes is very effective in securing good behaviour. Staff are assiduous in ensuring that all pupils are treated equally regardless of gender, disability or ethnic origin.

18. Teaching is less successful when the number of staff in a classroom is insufficient to ensure individual attention for all pupils who need it, particularly when other legitimate demands on their time reduces the available number of support staff still further. Teachers have only recently had access to improved ICT resources and the use of these has not yet become established as an integral learning tool. This reflects the lack of detailed planning across the curriculum to ensure that the key communication skills are consistently addressed.

19. The school has good systems for assessing and recording pupils’ standards and progress in appropriate areas, making use of standardised scales. Recording of progress towards individual targets is carefully and consistently carried out and the information is used well in planning. The Annual Review procedures are good and these, together with regular reports, ensure that parents and others who need the information are well informed as to pupils’ achievements.

20. The school’s curriculum is broad balanced and, above all, relevant to the needs and abilities of pupils; it meets requirements with several outstanding features and only a few shortcomings. Pupils’ basic skills are well promoted as is their social development, which in turn is well supported by the PSHE programme. Planning for consistent promotion of key skills is less secure, although the school sees this aspect as underpinning its whole approach. Pupils’ spiritual, moral and cultural development is well promoted. The range of extra-curricular and off-site activities as well as additional activities during lunchtimes, together
with the use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum, are particular strengths.

21. The school has responded well to Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and local initiatives and ensured that implementing these takes good account of pupils’ needs. Response to sustainable development initiatives is particularly strong. The school makes efforts to celebrate pupils’ Welsh heritage, but this is not firmly embedded in subject planning across the year.

22. Links with parents, the community and schools are well established. The overwhelming majority of parents are very supportive and have excellent relationships with the school. The prospectus and governors’ reports provide good information and meet requirements. Other forms of communication, including regular newsletters, are very effective, and parents are confident that any concerns or suggestions will be taken seriously.

23. Support, guidance and pupils’ welfare have a very high priority in the school and consequently the provision has a significant number of outstanding features. All statutory requirements in this area are met. Great care is taken to ensure pupils’ safety and well-being in spite of difficulties imposed by the building. In particular, the school is very successful in ensuring that pupils’ disabilities do not limit their access to the curriculum and extra-curricular activities.

24. The arrangements for identifying additional SEN are good and the school makes every effort to see that these are met. However, in some areas where the school is reliant on outside providers, such as in speech and language support, identified needs cannot be fully met.

Leadership and management

25. The school has a clear statement of vision and appropriate related aims, including a commitment to equal opportunities and inclusion, that are very well reflected in the work of the school.

26. The appointment of the current headteacher has resulted in a significant cultural change within the school that has been welcomed by governors, staff and pupils, and is already having a significant effect on the way that the school is led and managed at all levels. There is a new and very effective SLT, and subject co-ordinators are increasingly taking responsibility for monitoring and improving standards in their subjects. Curriculum planning is monitored on a termly basis; individual timetables are scrutinised, but there is no systematic audit of curriculum structure or coverage across the school.

27. The governing body is now more fully involved in setting the strategic direction of the school. Governors are developing a good understanding of the effectiveness of the school, including the identification of priorities for improvement through the self-review process and are now more closely involved in developing the annual self improvement plan (SIP). Self-evaluation is a relatively recent innovation that is still narrowly based and takes limited account of the views and aspirations of parents, pupils (where appropriate) and other stakeholders.

28. The school makes good use of its staffing and resources for learning and deploys them as effectively as possible within the constraints imposed by the overall budget and the accommodation. Decisions about spending are very well
matched to the school’s priorities. Nevertheless, in spite of a significant increase in overall numbers this year, at times there are still insufficient support staff to ensure that pupils’ curriculum needs can be fully met, particularly in classes for younger pupils. While the overall staffing ratio reflects the recommended levels for this kind of school, there is insufficient account taken of the need of some pupils for consistent one-to-one support. The accommodation, which was determined to be unsatisfactory at the previous inspection, remains unsatisfactory; the LEA has recognised the need for a new school, but planning is still at an early stage. Resources for learning are good overall. However, in spite of significant recent upgrading, there are still shortcomings in ICT provision to meet the specific needs of these pupils.

29. Overall, in light of the standards achieved, the quality of education offered, the efficiency with which resources are used and the very high regard in which parents hold the school, Ty Gwyn offers good value for money.

**Recommendations**

In order to further improve the school, the staff and governing body need to:

**R1.** In conjunction with the LEA and other providers;

- improve accommodation so that it is more suited to the current school population. *(This was a key issue at the previous inspection and has not yet been addressed)*;
- establish a basis for funding that takes account of the specific needs of pupils with PMLD to ensure that one-to-one support can be provided where necessary; and
- improve the provision of speech and language support to ensure that pupils' communication needs can be addressed on the basis of specific interdisciplinary advice.

**R2.** Address the following issues relating to curriculum planning and monitoring identified in the report:

- ensure that whole-school planning for the development of key skills is securely embedded in teachers’ subject planning, with particular emphasis on ICT and communication skills;
- extend SLT monitoring of planning to include an audit of the curriculum actually delivered and establish a common format for timetables that clearly reflects this;
- further develop the role of curriculum co-ordinators so that they are able to monitor their subject and plan for improvement on a secure basis; and
- ensure that *Y Cyrricwlwm Cymreig* is securely embedded in subject planning throughout the year.

**R3.** Consolidate the progress made in self-evaluation, extend this to take account of a wider range of views and ensure it links clearly to school improvement planning; and

**R4.** address any other subject or aspect shortcomings identified in the body of the report.
The Governing body and SLT have shown that they are aware of the great majority of these issues by identifying them as targets for improvement and planning strategies to address those that are within the school’s control.

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?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

30. The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.

31. Standards of achievement are good overall and in nearly all subjects. Overall, pupils’ standards of achievement in lessons exceeds the WAG all-Wales targets for 95% of standards to be satisfactory (reflected by grade 3) and 50% to be good (reflected by grade 2).

32. The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children’s Learning. The standards achieved in each area are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language, literacy and communication</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and social development</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematical development</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and understanding of the world</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative development</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical development</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33. Pupils arrive in the school with a limited range of attainments which are, overall, very low. While in the school, pupils continue to work at levels significantly below level one of the National Curriculum (NC). While individual pupils make good progress, the extent of their disabilities means that some older pupils attain at a lower level than some younger ones so that it is not appropriate to report pupils’ actual attainments within subjects by key stage, although judgements of standards are so reported.

34. In Key Stages 1 to 4 and at Post-16, the standards of achievement are good with no important shortcomings in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, geography, history, art, music, physical education and religious education. In IT, while there are significant shortcomings, these are outweighed by the strengths. As pupils are disapplied from the requirement to learn Welsh or a modern foreign language, these subjects are not taught.

35. Although the school uses assessment data to measure individual achievement and to set individual targets, which are shared with parents and, where appropriate with pupils, it is not appropriate to set overall targets for attainment.
At the same time, the absence of benchmark data means that it is not yet possible for the school to compare achievement with that in similar schools.

36. A majority of pupils have continuing learning difficulties that mean that they do not develop an effective use of language and have to rely on other means of communication. To the extent that they have language, pupils’ standards and progress in the key skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing, across the curriculum develop well, as they do in the use of numeracy. Although pupils’ ICT skills are less well developed, strengths in their use outweigh weaknesses. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark for both primary and secondary age-groups. Creative development and problem-solving skills develop well and higher-attaining and more aware pupils show understanding of sustainable development issues and healthy living requirements. Pupils are not taught Welsh and, in light of the communication difficulties many have, it is not appropriate to make a judgement of their bilingual skills.

37. Pupils make good progress towards the targets in their IEPs. These cover a broad range of skills and knowledge and form the basis for judgements on pupils’ progress. There are no differences in attainment between girls and boys, nor are there any identifiable groups of pupils who achieve differently from their peers.

38. Pupils’ personal development is a significant strength of the school. Standards in PSHE are good with outstanding features. Pupils who are non-responsive on arrival learn to respond to a range of stimuli and, in some cases, seek out effects that they can cause. To the extent that they are capable of doing so, pupils in all key stages show high levels of motivation and are eager to learn. They work hard and take great pleasure in doing well. They treat staff, visitors and each other with respect and courtesy and offer support to others less fortunate than themselves. They show good awareness of the differences between themselves and others and respond well to the experience of diversity.

39. They show positive attitudes to the school and enjoy taking responsibility as they do in the school council and when Post-16 pupils undertake the shopping for food technology lessons. They are aware of the responsibility of the present generation to protect the future through a commitment to sustainable development and there is a high degree of recycling. Independence skills at an appropriate level are effectively developed through a sustained programme and pupils are equipped thereby for life after school.

40. Pupils develop a concept of the local community through visits and activities but most have limited awareness of the world of work, in which few, if any will participate. However, for those pupils who are likely to be able to contemplate employment, the experiences provided by Vision 21 and access to the Careers Service support good understanding. Participation in mini-enterprises provides pupils with a good basis for economic understanding.

41. Behaviour is very good overall; for those pupils who exhibit (mainly involuntary) challenging behaviour, effective management approaches, including enhanced staffing, reduce incidents to a minimum.

42. Attendance is good overall taking pupils’ health-related difficulties into account, with an average for the year of 86.5%; the apparently high level of unauthorised absence results from the failure of a few parents to provide explanations for
absences, which could otherwise be authorised. Pupils are transported to school so any issues of punctuality are beyond their control.

**The quality of education and training**

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

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43. The quality of teaching was judged as follows:

44. The percentage of good and very good lessons is well above the Welsh average; good teaching is the norm across the school and in all subjects. At times, there are outstanding features and even in those lessons where teaching falls below the overall high standard, good features outweigh shortcomings.

45. Teaching is most effective when teachers and support staff work very effectively together with a clear joint understanding of what it is intended to achieve and how this relates to each pupil. In these lessons, the basic tasks are carefully matched to individual needs and abilities, reflecting the very good knowledge and understanding staff have of pupils’ strengths and disabilities.

46. Another significant strength of teaching is the extent to which staff achieve a good balance between exposing pupils to experiences through staff activity and encouraging pupils to participate actively in practical tasks. This is particularly evident in creative and expressive areas of learning such as art and music; it is also well managed in food technology where successful outcomes are achieved with optimum pupil involvement. Another important aspect of this is the extent to which staff promote equal opportunities and actively address race and disability equality.

47. Very good classroom relationships and particularly the affectionate rapport established by teachers with their pupils ensure that classrooms are well-managed and successful learning environments in spite of the limitations imposed by the inadequate size of many classrooms. Approaches to ensure constant good behaviour are very effective; this is especially true in those classes for pupils who have a tendency to exhibit challenging behaviour. In these classes, secure understanding of the specialist approach to teaching and the rapport between staff ensure that challenging behaviour rarely disrupts learning.

48. At times, in a number of lessons, the quality of learning falls off for particular groups of pupils, particularly those with the lowest attainments, when there are insufficient staff to provide the individual access to the curriculum that these pupils require. This is exacerbated when pupils require personal support, such as changing, outside the classroom, which can significantly further reduce staffing as a result of manual handling and child protection requirements.

49. Although there are examples of good practice, overall, teachers make insufficient use of ICT to support teaching and learning. While, in part, this is due to limited resources and the recent arrival of much of what there is, the absence of detailed planning for this aspect of pupils’ key skills is a school-wide
shortcoming, particularly for pupils with visual impairment. This is, in turn a result of the lack of a whole-school policy for ensuring the incorporation of key communication skills in subject planning - the school believes that this aspect of learning underpins all its work, but there is insufficient planning to ensure this is so. For pupils with severely limited speech and language, the very limited provision of external support and advice, limits the effectiveness with which teaching can address these needs.

50. All members of staff have access to detailed and accurate knowledge of pupils’ progress and set appropriate targets for individual pupils based on this information. Pupils are assessed in English, science, mathematics and PSHE using ‘P’ scales during the summer term and the outcomes are used to determine IEP targets. Individual targets for all subject areas are identified in weekly planning and reviewed half-termly. Whole-school target-setting based on information gathered from assessment is not yet established.

51. All staff work closely to assess pupil progress. Daily teacher-led class team meetings discuss very detailed, specific targets within weekly planning. The regular assessment ensures appropriate provision to meet pupil need. For older students the requirements of examination boards and other regulatory bodies are satisfied.

52. Pupils’ understanding of their progress is supported by objects of reference, augmentative communication aids and other methods to support comprehension. Praise is used constantly by all staff to register and celebrate pupils’ achievement.

53. Statutory requirements for reviewing learners’ statements are met. Parents are invited to Annual Review meetings where IEPs are discussed at length. They are invited to provide other areas which might be considered in need of extra support. Parents are also invited to half termly IEP review meetings. Where appropriate pupils are involved in setting targets.

54. Multidisciplinary agencies and support agencies associated with individual pupils are asked for advice and asked to attend Annual Review meetings.

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

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

55. The Inspection team’s findings match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.

56. The school offers a broad balanced and especially relevant curriculum that is well matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils. It meets the statutory requirements of the Education Act 1996 and is very effective in terms of differentiating work to meet the need of individual pupils.

57. Pupils’ basic skills are well promoted. PSHE features prominently and forms an integral part of the whole curriculum.

58. The school identifies the development of key skills as underpinning all of its work. However, planning to ensure the consistent promotion of all key skills is not fully in place and there is no specific policy to ensure this. As a result, some aspects, especially ICT skills are inconsistently promoted.
59. Opportunities to develop and encourage pupils’ social development are carefully planned and well used. Very good relationships exist between pupils and staff and this has a significant impact on pupils’ emerging social skills. The school council gives pupils a good opportunity to take responsibility and be involved in decision making.

60. Collective worship and work in individual subject areas provide good opportunities for pupils to develop cultural and spiritual awareness. The school recognises the cultural diversity of its pupils and it ensures that pupils develop a good understanding of other world faiths and cultures.

61. Some efforts are made to create a Welsh ethos within the school. St David’s Day is celebrated; pupils sing Welsh songs, make Welsh cakes and listen to stories about Wales. However there is a lack of consistent planning across all subjects throughout the year and limited use of incidental and conversational Welsh, so that pupils’ cultural and linguistic identity is not consistently promoted.

62. The school responds well to WAG and local initiatives. Sustainable development and global citizenship are promoted very well. Older pupils are actively engaged in a recycling project which involves the whole school.

63. The extra-curricular provision is very good and ensures that pupils’ development is enhanced through a range of activities. These include a wide range of educational visits and involvement in local and national events. The use of visits and visitors to enrich the curriculum is a particular strength of the school.

64. Post-16 students follow nationally accredited programmes of study and these courses offer appropriate challenges. Students have access to a range of work-related activities and good efforts are made to prepare students for a smooth transition from school to adult life in the community.

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

| Grade 1: good with outstanding features |

65. The Inspection team’s findings match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.

66. The school provides high quality personal support and guidance for pupils. This is an outstanding feature of the school. Staff have intimate knowledge of individual need and this is reflected in the immediate responses to pupils anxiety or discomfort in a classroom setting. The relaxed and happy ethos within the school and the confidence displayed by pupils reflects the support and role models given by staff. The support offered by non-teaching staff is outstanding.

67. The close links between teaching and non-teaching staff in the school creates a safe caring environment for all pupils, supporting needs as they arise. Nursing staff, physiotherapists and occupational therapists work closely with staff to support pupils effectively.

68. The contribution to pupils’ development arising from the weekly visit by a music therapist is an outstanding feature of the school. All pupils respond and participate enthusiastically during these sessions.
69. The mutual respect between staff and pupils is reflected in the welcoming, secure, happy community where pupils are valued and supported. The constant use of praise to celebrate achievement is a strength of the school.

70. The school is proud of its open door policy and parents are welcomed to school to support pupils. The overwhelming majority of parents are very supportive and have excellent relationships with the school. Parents are confident that any concerns or suggestions will be taken seriously. Parents are invited to school regularly and there is an annual Open Day. Parents receive a regular newsletter and there is an active ‘Friends of Ty Gwyn’ organisation.

71. The school has well developed links with the local community including the Cardiff Bus Company and The Millennium Centre. Students from local colleges are provided with work experience placements within the school.

72. Attendance and behaviour are monitored consistently and effectively and recorded appropriately. However, the school does not have a ‘first day response’ approach to absence, and the high levels of unauthorised absence result from parents not communicating the reason for absence.

73. There are close links with external agencies involved with the pupils in the school. This is a strength of the school ensuring that pupils’ special needs are identified and, where possible, met. Advice from other external agencies is good and is used very effectively to inform pupils’ individual planning. The very close links with medical and other agencies are an integral part of school life. Staff are aware of pupil medical needs and are able to access support if needed. However identified needs in relation to communication and speech and language skills are not fully met as a result of limited provision, especially for older pupils.

74. The school makes very good provision for pupils whose challenging behaviour would otherwise impede their own or others’ learning. The high level of staffing and the skills of the staff involved in the ‘TEACCH’ classes ensures that these are very successful learning environments and the advice from trained staff supports other teachers across the school.

75. Most pupils remain at school until they are 19. Post-16 students access the Equals “Moving On” curriculum which encourages independence skills. This is adapted to meet individual need. Pupils are supported by Careers Wales to plan for post-school provision.

76. Induction procedures for new pupils are a strength of the school. Parents are shown around relevant areas of the school on an initial visit and pupils are encouraged to visit the school for at least a morning before they enter. Initial information, including the school brochure is provided to parents before pupils start at the school. Pupils are made to feel safe and secure by all staff.

77. The school has adopted the All Wales procedures in relation to child protection. Procedures are well known and staff receive regular training. There is an identified person in charge of child protection in the school and staff indicate that they are aware of and understood the identified procedures.

78. Pupils at the school represent a diverse ethnicity and the school is very effective in valuing and supporting pupils form a wide range of backgrounds, promoting understanding and harmony and ensuring that all pupils have equal
access to the school’s provision. Any tendency to gender stereotyping is consistently challenged. There are no instances of oppressive behaviour, but the school has effective systems for dealing with any that might arise.

Leadership and management

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

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79. The Inspection team’s findings match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.

80. The school is well led and managed. The recently-appointed headteacher has established a clear vision and a renewed sense of purpose for the school and this has been welcomed by governors, staff and pupils. The headteacher and SLT have good relationships with the teaching and support staff and are committed to helping pupils achieve their potential. The school aims are clear, concise and appropriate and the staff and SLT ensure that they are reflected in practice.

81. The school takes account of WAG priorities and works well with other providers in the area to improve the quality of its provision especially for students at post 16. Initiatives such as the school council and planning and preparation time (PPA) for all teachers are well established.

82. A clearly defined management structure facilitates whole-school improvement. The SLT and subject co-ordinators are taking increasing responsibility for monitoring and improving standards. They monitor the planning of colleagues on a termly basis but there is no systematic audit of curriculum structure or coverage across the school. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning are not yet firmly established. The school has recognised the need to improve this so that the good practice that is evident may be shared.

83. The system for performance management is good. Opportunities for the continuing professional development for staff have increased and this has had an impact on raising standards and improving provision.

84. The school has whole school policies and schemes of work established in most subject areas. These provide a good balance and range of appropriate experiences that ensure that all pupils have equal access to a curriculum that is appropriate to their needs.

85. All staff have high expectations of the pupils. Effective target setting for individual pupils ensures their progress and clearly identifies realistic challenges for the future.

86. The governing body meets regularly and actively supports the work of the school. They are developing an increasing knowledge of the priorities for improvement through the self review process and are now more closely involved in developing the school improvement plan. The governing body takes its responsibilities seriously and plays a significant role in ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory duties.
87. The SLT, governors and all member’s of staff are very clear about their roles and responsibilities. Very effective communication systems ensure that requested information is passed on to those who need it. As a result the school runs smoothly on a day to day basis.

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

**Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings**

88. The Inspection team’s findings match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.

89. In its self evaluation report the school gave an accurate, concise and clear account of its own performance. The grades awarded by the inspection team match the school’s grades in all seven key questions.

90. The SLT, governors and staff are committed to improving standards. The head purposefully leads a self critical culture that permeates the life of the school.

91. The outcomes of self evaluation are used to inform the priorities in the SIP, a comprehensive working document that sets out the school priorities. Targets are costed and supported with adequate allocation and appropriate resources.

92. Subject co-ordinators monitor provision including teachers’ termly planning and resources. Self evaluation in co-ordinators’ subject reports is broadly accurate and comprehensive. It clearly identifies strengths and areas for improvement giving a good indication of what needs to be done in order to improve the work in the subject. Generally, however, they do not focus enough on pupils’ standards of achievement. Curricular leaders have commenced classroom observations in mathematics, music and physical education and the classroom observation of all other subjects is planned.

93. The school values the views of the LEA. The link adviser’s oral and written contributions both inform and support the school’s self review. For example, the adviser undertook a review of physical education, alongside the subject co-ordinator.

94. Performance management is beginning to be effective in promoting teachers’ continuing development and improving school effectiveness. The SLT is encouraging all staff to question what they do and what they need to do better.

95. Through staff meetings and daily briefing notes, staff contribute to the self evaluation process. The views of pupils are also beginning to be taken into account where appropriate through the school council. Pupils’ views have been gained through advocacy because of their profound learning difficulties but whenever possible they are encouraged to exercise choices in lessons, extra-curricular activities and in assemblies.

96. The SLT take account of the views of parents and guardians and have recognised the need to develop formal structures to enhance the contribution parents and other stakeholders are able to make to the self evaluation processes.
97. A very high percentage of parents and guardians at the school returned a questionnaire to the inspection team. The majority expressed very positive responses towards all aspects of the school’s work.

98. The SIP identifies appropriate priorities and the means of measuring successful achievements and outcomes. Targets are set half termly and regularly monitored by the SLT. However, the school has yet to develop fully the interpretation of data needed to plan for improvement in teaching and learning effectively. The school plans to incorporate comparative analysis from Durham University in the next SIP.

99. The school has made good progress in the last two terms and has transformed both the Special Needs focus and the quality of education it provides. Measurable improvements have resulted from its actions. Although much remains to be done, the school has made good progress in raising standards and curricular provision.

100. The school has made satisfactory progress overall since the last inspection. It has successfully raised standards in subjects which were identified as having shortcomings and improved the behaviour and the provision for those youngsters with challenging behaviour.

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

| Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings |

101. The Inspection team’s findings match the judgement made by the school in the self-evaluation report.

102. The school has a sufficient number of experienced and suitably qualified teachers who are well deployed. Although the number of support staff has been increased significantly this academic year on a temporary basis, at times there continues to be an inadequate number of them to ensure that the pupils’ curriculum needs are fully met. This is particularly the case in classes for the younger pupils.

103. Although the overall staffing ratio reflects the recommended levels for a school such as this one when the specific needs of some pupils for consistent one to one support is taken into account then shortcomings become evident.

104. The projected budget for this new financial year, although not finalised, indicates that the support staff deficit will remain and this despite a projected increase in pupil numbers this coming September.

105. In addition to its teams of nurses, physiotherapists and other specialists, the school receives some support from the LEA’s service for pupils with visual or hearing impairment. However, this is limited and other support, in particular speech and language therapies are in short supply. All staff work well together to form an effective team, supporting each other with their specialisms and strengths.

106. Generally pupils have access to good resources across the school. Although a significant amount of money has been recently invested in new computers and some good use is made of ICT resources there are still shortcomings in these resources, which have, in the past, not kept pace with the development of
technology to meet pupils’ needs, including communication aids. There is insufficient play equipment for secondary age pupils and the library is not properly utilised as a learning resource. The pupils benefit from the availability of four mini-buses.

107. The school building remains unsatisfactorily, as at the time of the previous inspection, and is inadequate to fully meet the needs of the pupils at this school. The staff work hard to overcome these inadequacies and to ensure that the lack of storage for equipment such as wheelchairs does not give rise to health and safety hazards. Although the school has a useful hall, a well resourced sensory room, a few adequately sized classrooms and a pleasant sensory garden the deficiencies are numerous. Most classrooms are very small, limiting the range of activities, and other facilities such as the hydrotherapy pool are inadequate. There are no withdrawal rooms and toileting facilities are poor and inadequate. Only mobile hoists are available with no tracking facilities. There are inadequate storage facilities for equipment and resources which often results in corridor areas being overcrowded.

108. Staff make good use of every part of the accommodation. Despite operating within a highly constraining budgetary situation every class has an allocated funding for resources. The decisions relating to the spending on staffing, the building and resources match well the priorities for development.

109. Good efforts are made to ensure that all staff are deployed, managed and developed effectively. In addition to the effective co-ordination of the Better School Fund by the deputy headteacher the school identifies additional funding for the professional development of the teaching assistants.

110. Financial monitoring is well structured and is a regular feature of senior leadership team and governors meetings. The school achieves good standards, offers a quality learning experience and the parents hold the school in high regard and affection. The Governors and senior managers budget for school priorities wisely and spending decisions benefit all pupils. Consequently, overall, the school gives good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Under 5s

Language, literacy and communication skills

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

111. Children establish good eye contact and listen very well to their teacher and support staff. They show signs of early communication through the use of eye contact, PECS, physical movements and objects of reference.

112. Children show good listening skills when responding to music and vocal stimulus on tape. They show awareness of communication in circle time.

113. Children communicate their feelings about activities by indicating pleasure or displeasure. Higher-attaining children identify a picture of themselves and match it to their name.
Shortcomings
114. There are no important shortcomings.

Personal and social development
Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features
115. Children learn to interact positively with each other and with their teacher and other staff. They show enjoyment when experiencing joint activities
116. All pupils convey their feelings during an activity. They respond appropriately to circle time and relate to the ‘welcome’ song. They respond well to praise and positive feedback. Higher-attaining children show increasing understanding of turn-taking.

Shortcomings
117. There are no important shortcomings.

Mathematical development
Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features
118. Throughout the school day children encounter mathematical language and concepts. They become aware of objects and show some awareness of shape and size. They match colours and shapes.
119. Some children show awareness of the passing of time and know that things happen at different times. Higher-attaining children show a developing awareness of sequence.

Shortcomings
120. There are no important shortcomings.

Knowledge and understanding of the world
Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features
121. Children encounter a variety of stimuli to support awareness of the world outside themselves. They enjoy and respond to a variety of smells, bubbles, and music to enhance their experience. They use touch to select items from a ‘feely’ bag. They experience the difference between ‘rough’ and ‘smooth’
122. Children take part in activities that extend their knowledge of the world as, when, for example, they relate to India Week in the school. They taste a variety of foods and examine instruments from other lands.

Shortcomings
123. There are no important shortcomings.

Physical development
Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.
Good features
124. Children enjoy and are stimulated by the experience of assisted movement. They experience rocking and swinging with adult support.

125. Higher-attaining children make good progress in developing awareness and control of their bodies. They move their fingers independently, clench and unclench hands and move independently to music.

Shortcomings
126. There are no important shortcomings.

Creative development

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.

Good features
127. Children show an increasing ability to make intentional decorative marks on paper, including the use of paint and other media.

128. They experience and participate appropriately in the ‘welcome’ song and other musical activities. They respond to music and communicate their enjoyment of it.

Shortcomings
129. There are no important shortcomings.

English

Key Stage 1 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.
Key Stage 2 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.
Key Stage 3 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.
Key Stage 4 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.
Post-16 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good Features
130. Across the school pupils make good progress in reading, writing, speaking and listening because the work they are given is well matched to their individual needs.

131. Pupils are confident and secure in the learning environment. They listen carefully and respond enthusiastically, and this enhances the progress they make.

132. In all aspects of English, pupils make good progress towards the targets contained in their IEPs. Evidence from the assessment process used by the school shows that pupils make significant progress whilst at the school, including those pupils exhibiting challenging behaviour.

133. Many pupils show a developing awareness that particular stories are linked with certain books, pictures, signs, symbols and music. They demonstrate a good understanding of how books work; for example, by holding them the right way up and turning pages from left to right. Higher-attaining pupils enjoy books and handle them carefully. They recognise some familiar letters by sight and sound.

134. The youngest pupils begin to communicate intentionally as they explore objects, imitate adults, repeat single words and phrases and start to combine ideas.
135. Older pupils benefit from good questioning in their literacy lessons to extend their vocabulary and awareness of communication. They respond to questions with relevant answers exploring the new words that they meet with enthusiasm. Lower-attaining pupils use sign and symbols well to explain themselves to make appropriate choices.

136. Pupils, when supported, match words, pictures and symbols; they use computers and augmentative communication aids to develop their understanding of lessons.

137. All pupils communicate with adults in the classroom effectively. Visitors to the school are greeted appropriately in many classes throughout the school and pupils develop confidence in a range of communication skills.

138. More-able secondary age pupils engage in cooperative exploration, respond to familiar people and activities and show emerging awareness of activities and experiences. On a visit to Cardiff Bay they respond positively to the outdoor environment and are given opportunities to develop their social skills when they visit the Lightship Café.

139. Lower-attaining secondary age pupils respond well to a variety of sensory stimulation. Some visually track moving objects or turn towards a sound or their name being called. They are learning to have control over their environment through the use of switches. Others follow simple instruction to take part in practical lessons.

140. Pupils recently took part in a whole school dramatic production which was a success. Pupils gained in confidence and enjoyed the process. Performing in front of an audience makes a significant contribution to the good levels of achievement that pupils make in speaking, listening and communication as well as in their personal development.

141. Post-16 students continue to make good progress in all aspects of English.

**Shortcomings**

142. There are no important shortcomings.

**Welsh second language**

143. All pupils are appropriately disapplied from the requirement to learn Welsh.

**Mathematics**

- Key Stage 1 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
- Key Stage 2 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
- Key Stage 3 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
- Key Stage 4 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
- Post-16 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

**Good features**

144. Pupils make good progress throughout their time at the school in discriminating between different objects, learning to match, order and count them in a range of contexts. They enjoy participating in or experiencing number songs and rhymes such as ‘five little speckled frogs’ with one being removed in each verse.
145. Pupils learn that quantities can be represented by figures. Lower-attaining pupils learn to react to numbers and, with encouragement, to look closely at the numerals from one to five. Higher-attaining pupils count objects to ten and, on occasion subtract five to report that five are left.

146. Pupils sort a range of objects by identity, colour and size. They match a given object by selecting from a range of similar objects. Higher-attaining pupils identify match and continue a simple sequence using two colours. They complete simple puzzles by matching the shape of the pieces to holes in the baseboard.

147. Awareness of capacity develops when pupils transfer materials from and into different sized containers. They discover that the contents of a small bottle do not fill a large one and that the contents of a large one overfill the small one. They compare the capacity of containers by counting the number of small cupfuls of pasta each takes to fill it.

148. Pupils develop an awareness of comparative mathematical language such as ‘short/tall’, ‘big/small’, ‘light/heavy’ and demonstrate these concepts in different settings. Higher-attaining pupils know and demonstrate that the heavier pan of a pair of scales goes down and that to balance, objects must be removed or equivalent objects placed in the other pan. They choose the taller of two people and identify people who are shorter or taller than themselves. They compare the sizes of their hands and use handprints as non-standard measures to compare the size of objects in the classroom.

149. Pupils encounter a range of shapes and solids which they join in a variety of ways. Higher-attaining pupils identify a selection of two-dimensional shapes by name and use these in different combinations to create patterns.

150. In a range of different settings, pupils show awareness of time sequences - recognising the times of the day at which things occur and following a sequence of commands in order. Pupils who follow a visual timetable are able to use it to predict what will occur next. Pupils learn time-related language such as ‘start’ and ‘finish’.

151. Post-16 students continue to develop their numeracy skills well and apply these in a range of contexts.

**Shortcomings**

152. There are no important shortcomings.

**Science**

| Key Stage 1 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
| Key Stage 2 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
| Key Stage 3 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
| Key Stage 4 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
| Post-16 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |

**Good features**

153. Pupils throughout the school achieve good standards in science and increase their understanding and knowledge of the world around them.
154. In lessons, they enjoy the work and maintain interest over extended periods of time, especially when the work is of a practical nature.

155. Pupils at KS1 and KS2 with the most profound special educational needs respond very positively to the experience of feeling the difference between wet and dry sand. Their reaction to these experiences is carefully monitored and recorded to show progression.

156. More able pupils at KS1 and KS2 make good progress when working with ice trays, hot water bottles, hair dryers and ice cream to discover the difference between hot and cold. They respond with increasing confidence and sometimes anticipate what will happen next.

157. Pupils at KS3 and KS4 carry out simple experiments with magnetic objects using various shapes and non-magnetic objects using various shapes and sizes of magnets. They observe the results of their experiments with enthusiasm and interest.

158. Post-16 students increase their understanding of science through a modular approach, with units of work being linked to external assessment and certification. Students experience and show awareness and interest when classifying a variety of recyclable materials.

**Shortcomings**

159. There are no important shortcomings.

### Information technology

**Key Stage 1 – Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings  
**Key Stage 2 – Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings  
**Key Stage 3 – Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings  
**Key Stage 4 – Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings  
**Post-16 – Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Good features**

160. Pupils make effective use of a range of IT hardware and software for a variety of purposes, individually and, more often, with help. Pupils use switches to access applications, make choices and bring about desired effects. For example they know that items of electrical equipment can be turned on and off and use this to operate a fan or, in food technology, food mixers.

161. Higher-attaining older pupils, particularly students in the Post-16 class, use higher-order IT skills as when they write their names using a word-processor or compose a simple tune on a virtual keyboard. Occasionally they make unexpected and unintended discoveries as when one student learns that she can control the movement of the cursor by touching the screen and enjoys bringing it back to a position where she can interact with it.

162. Pupils are developing an awareness of the recreational possibilities of IT and use the interactive whiteboard to select from a range of short video clips derived from a dedicated website for special school materials.

163. Pupils who are capable of forming an intention and carrying it out, use a touch screen successfully to cause events on screen and to vary the position of objects; for example by dragging and dropping them at another part of the
screen by ‘popping’ balloons or completing a picture. They learn the necessity to wait for one operation to be completed before initiating another and take turns in games for two players.

164. Pupils with limited mobility make use of a sound beam to create visual and auditory effects, showing awareness that they are doing so.

165. Records of achievement show pupils making progress in building on their skills as they move through the school.

166. In some lessons, pupils use their developing IT skills to support learning in other subjects as, for example, when they match numerals to collections of objects on screen.

**Shortcomings**

167. Pupils do not develop the full range of skills as a result of limited access to hardware and software, much of which is newly arrived in school.

168. Pupils’ skills in the use of communications technology to make choices and to articulate their wishes through communication aids are 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**  
**Key Stage 3 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**  
**Key Stage 4 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**  
**Post-16 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Good features**

169. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in developing skills in making simple artefacts, usually as part of a cross-curricular theme. They learn to use simple hand tools to cut, shape and join materials, following a predetermined design.

170. Younger pupils show awareness of the possibility of combining materials from construction kits as, for example, when they use blocks to build a wall or a tower. They learn that clay can be used to make different shapes and decoration when they contribute to a school ceramics project.

171. They begin to evaluate materials and artefacts according to what they like or dislike expressing preferences and making choices between different materials and design features. They make realistic models of artefacts from different cultures as, for example, didgeridoos as part of a study of Australian aboriginal culture.

172. In food technology lessons, they encounter a good range of materials and processes and participate to an individually appropriate degree in producing satisfying products both sweet and savoury, which they evaluate by tasting. In the process they use hand and power tools and become aware of the uses of different kinds of cooking appliance.

173. Work in design and technology reinforces their understanding of cause and effect as they control equipment by means of switches and experience the results of heating materials, for example when they melt chocolate to cover their lamington cake or make Easter nests.
174. Students in the post-16 class develop increased understanding of food preparation processes as part of their ‘Moving On’ course. They participate actively in shopping for both their own lessons and those of younger pupils, so that they experience the process from start to finish. This makes an effective contribution to the development of independence skills.

**Shortcomings**

175. There are no important shortcomings.

**Modern foreign language**

176. All pupils are appropriately disapplied from the requirement to learn a modern foreign language.

**History**

**Key Stage 1 – Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings  
**Key Stage 2 – Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings  
**Key Stage 3 – Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings  
**Key Stage 4 – Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings  
**Post-16 – Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings

**Good Features**

177. History is planned and delivered through a two year cycle of termly topics. These topics are well matched to individual pupil needs. As a consequence of this pupils make good progress.

178. Pupils of all ages develop an awareness of time and its relevance to their daily lives during the introductory session each day.

179. Pupils with the most profound special educational needs demonstrate positive responses to a range of auditory, visual and tactile stimuli when studying life in Tudor times. Pupils look at pictures, handle artefacts and listen to Tudor music with increasing confidence.

180. More-able pupils develop a good understanding of differences between life now and life in the past by undertaking a variety of visits to places of historical interest including St Fagan’s museum, Castell Coch and Barry railway station.

181. Pupils and post-16 students make good progress in developing their basic observational and communication skills while studying history.

**Shortcomings**

182. There are no important shortcomings.

**Geography**

**Key Stage 1 – Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings  
**Key Stage 2 – Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings  
**Key Stage 3 – Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings  
**Key Stage 4 – Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings

**Good Features**

183. Across all key stages pupils develop awareness of countries other than their own. They take part activities which have introduced them to cultures from Africa and South America. India Week introduced all pupils to Indian food,
clothes and music and they visited Indian shops in the locality. Year 11 pupils made a map of India out of spices.

184. Pupils develop an appropriate awareness of weather; they are introduced to weather conditions on a daily basis. Lower-attaining pupils encounter and respond to stimuli associated with different weather conditions as they experience ‘rain’ through water spray and ‘wind’ by using a hair drier. Higher-attaining pupils learn about the impact of weather changes in their environment.

185. The youngest pupils look at people who help in school. They encounter, and some develop an increasing awareness of, the different jobs in school using sensory cues such as sound, aromatherapy, and music. Older pupils shadow jobs and visit workplaces to learn about rules of safety and hygiene.

186. Primary age pupils encounter a variety of African resources and make choices using eye pointing, finger pointing, symbols etc. They become familiar with the shape of Africa, acknowledge the difference between hot and cold and handle clothes and materials from Africa.

187. Secondary age pupils learn to find Wales and Australia on a map and on a globe. Less-able pupils experience feeling warm air from a hair dryer to simulate warm dry air. Pupils gave increasing levels of eye contact when exposed to sounds from a didgeridoo.

Shortcomings

188. There are no important shortcomings.

Art

Key Stage 1 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Key Stage 2 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Key Stage 3 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Key Stage 4 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Post-16 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good Features

189. Across the school, higher-attaining pupils acquire a good understanding of techniques and develop a range of skills that enable them to produce very good representations of what they observe as well as providing work in both two dimensional and three dimensional format.

190. Around the school there are many colourful displays which demonstrate good pupil achievement and the positive way in which art supports learning in other curricular areas.

191. Primary age pupils use tie-dye techniques to create designs and make a visual representation of African painting using fabric printing, which they proudly display on their classroom wall.

192. Secondary age pupils explore and experiment with mixing colours to produce a natural colour background and explore various ways of creating ‘dot’ pictures in their study of Australian (Aboriginal) art.

193. In all key stages, pupils work on ceramics and collage with the support of a ceramics instructor employed by the school and they achieve very good standards with her support.
194. Pupils use their hands and feet to make prints and create colour. They experience art in a range of forms and accept a range of sensory experiences. Throughout the school pupils study and explore techniques of famous artists using a range of style and employing a variety of media.

195. Post-16 students use their developing skills well to present work attractively and to illustrate work across the curriculum.

**Shortcomings**

196. Pupils have limited knowledge of Welsh artists.

**Music**

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

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

**Key Stage 3 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Key Stage 4 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Good Features**

197. Across all key stages pupils use music as a means to express ideas and communicate feelings. They have contributed to the “Christmas Extravaganza” and some have taken part in the Cardiff School Prom. All pupils listen to and enjoy whole-school visits from “Live Music Now”, and “India Dance Wales”.

198. Pupils across the school participate in weekly sessions with a music therapist. Pupils of all abilities respond to pitch, rhythm and texture. All pupils access instruments to play with some working independently. Pupil participation during this session is an outstanding feature of the school.

199. The youngest pupils relate to sounds while interacting with the soundbeam and resonance board to experience vibration. They use their bodies to make a variety of sounds. Some pupils choose their own instruments and play them independently.

200. Primary age pupils select instruments of their choice. Less-able pupils follow simple commands such as “play on” while more-able pupils discriminate between the sounds made by a drum and a tambourine.

201. Secondary age pupils listen well to a piece of music composed by Mozart. Their attention is drawn to long notes and they explore instruments that can play these. More-able pupils recall the name of instruments they have played.

202. Older pupils follow a rhythm using coloured pompoms. They adapt the speed of movement to match the pace of music.

203. Key stage 4 pupils and post-16 students experience listening to music at varying speed. Some students beat out a rhythm independently, others with support. They listen to a range of music including such pieces as ‘The Entertainer’ and ‘Come on Eileen’ and move at varying speeds in time with the music.

**Shortcomings**

204. There are no important shortcomings.
Physical education

Key Stage 1 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Key Stage 2 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Key Stage 3 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Key Stage 4 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good Features

205. Pupils respond well to clear instructions, follow routines systematically and appreciate the importance of warm-up and relaxing after exercise. They concentrate well and although they need no encouragement to work they respond excellently to praise.

206. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in all aspects of the subject. Secondary age pupils achieve very well in leisure-time activities, like dance and cycling, where they apply skills in a different context.

207. Primary age pupils make good progress in acquiring basic water skills and confidence in the school’s own hydrotherapy pool. In gymnastics they explore the different ways of performing basic actions, using hands and feet, turning, rolling and balancing on the mats, developing their skills well.

208. In dance, primary age pupils experience linking movements to those made by others and start to develop turn-taking, following instruction from a Welsh music tape. Secondary age pupils demonstrate turn-taking when working in pairs and enjoy developing sequences and performing them in front of others. Through learning new songs and actions in dance lessons the work also contributes to pupil’s experience of music.

209. Pupils participate in an active extra-curricular sports programme, which also includes the South East Regional Multisports Festival where they participate in curling, boccia, football and skittles; the South Wales Regional Athletics; Adapted Cycling at Pontcanna; the Cardiff and the Vale Boccia Tournament; Touch Therapy at the Millennium Centre; weekly visits to Splott Swimming Pool and the Wacky Warehouse (soft play equipment).

210. Pupils gain certificates and awards for a range of sports.

211. Across the key stages the levels at which pupils attain in all aspects of the subject are limited by the complexities of their movement difficulties and not by their lack of desire or enthusiasm for the subject.

Shortcomings

212. There are no important shortcomings.
Religious education

Key Stage 1 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Key Stage 2 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Key Stage 3 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Key Stage 4 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings
Post-16 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good Features

213. No lessons in religious education were able to be seen during the inspection. However an examination of subject files and discussion with staff shows that the agreed syllabus has been appropriately adapted to meet the needs of the pupils and that pupils achieve good standards.

214. Primary age pupils demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the world through studying different aspects of the seaside.

215. Secondary age pupils achieve good standards in areas such as visual discrimination and co-operating with others when looking at photographs and wedding clothes as part of their work on weddings.

216. Across the whole age and ability range pupils become increasingly aware of different religions. For example, pupils enjoy celebrating special occasions such as Eid and the end of Ramadan. They make good progress in increasing their awareness of ‘special’ events.

217. Students at post-16 experience and respond positively to artefacts and symbols of Christianity during multi-sensory presentations of religious stories. They respond with interest and with improved listening skills.

Shortcomings

218. There are no important shortcomings.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE)

Outstanding features

219. Many pupils arrive in the school with a very limited sense of their own personal identity or awareness of other people. For the most part, while at the school, pupils make very good progress in both these areas. This progress is reflected in the extent to which pupils respond to those who care for them and the degree to which they relate to other pupils as well as identifying aspects that make the ‘special’ including celebrating their own ‘special days’. Pupils make this progress both through the planned events in the PSHE programme, for example in ‘tac pac’ sessions, and the continuous input and role modelling by staff.

220. Social responsibility develops very well as pupils show very good concern for the needs of others and consider their needs, for example in the daily routines and duties they perform as well as the school council, and show very good
awareness of the need to sustain the environment through recycling and other good practice.

**Good features**

221. For a number of pupils, awareness of membership of a group develops well. They identify the staff that take daily responsibility for them and demonstrate an increased level of comfort in the group. In group activities, particularly those arising in music therapy sessions, they relate their own contribution to that of the teacher and each other. Higher-attaining pupils show awareness of the achievements and needs of others and show appropriately socialised levels of behaviour.

222. As awareness develops, pupils learn about the social world around them, including aspects of health and sex education, including healthy choices and personal safety. They develop confidence, learning to make appropriate choices and to communicate these. They become aware of the wider community as they participate in community visits and events.

223. Independence skills are a key element of the programme and pupils make very good progress in developing skills they will need later in life. Good progress is seen in the area of personal care from the youngest age-group onwards, and pupils learn about caring for others. They learn about their own bodies and how they are changing and come to understand that some parts of the body are regarded as private.

**Shortcomings**

224. There are no important shortcomings.

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**School's response to the inspection**

We are very pleased to note that the inspection team verified the grades identified in the school's self-evaluation report. Whilst we have made considerable progress in all areas of our work we acknowledge the need for continued improvement to ensure that we achieve higher grades in our next inspection.

All staff in the school work tirelessly to meet the needs of our pupils. We are delighted that this has been recognised. We are very proud of the percentages of lessons graded at 1 or 2 and the fact that we exceed the Welsh average. The high level of support we receive from parents and our governing body is crucial to the further development of the school.
Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of School: Ysgol TY Gwyn
School type: Community Special
Age-range of pupils: 3-19
Address of school: Ty Gwyn Road
Penylan
Cardiff
Post-Code: CF23 7JG
Telephone Number: 029 2048 5570
Headteacher: Mr K. Tansley
Date of appointment: September 2005
Chair of Appropriate Authority: Mr David French
Registered Inspector: Dr E Peagam
Dates of inspection: 8–11 May 2006

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

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Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results
All pupils are disapproved from end of key stage assessment
Appendix 4
Evidence base of the inspection
The inspection was carried out by a team of five inspectors over a period of four days, and the report was based on evidence from:

- pre-inspection meetings held with the headteacher, staff and the governing body;
- the analysis of 53 returned parents' questionnaires and a meeting with 16 parents;
- the observation of 51 lessons or part lessons and extra-curricular activities;
- a scrutiny of pupils' work where appropriate;
- an examination of assessment records and reports to parents;
- observation of registration procedures;
- the scrutiny of school documentation, teachers' plans and assessment records;
- observation of pupils' behaviour in and around the school at break-times, lunch-times and before and after school;
- attendance at assemblies;
- discussions with the headteacher and other staff;
- discussions with LEA link advisor and other support agencies; and
- post-inspection meetings with senior management and governing body.

Appendix 5 Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inspector</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Aspect Responsibilities</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. E. Peagam</td>
<td>RgI</td>
<td>Context, Summary, Key Questions 1 and 2.</td>
<td>design and technology, information technology mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. G Jones</td>
<td>Lay</td>
<td>Key Question 7 Contributions to Key Questions 3 and 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr. D. B. Morgan</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Key Question 6 contribution to Key Question 4</td>
<td>English, physical education, art</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs I Aubrey</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Key Question 4. Contribution to Key Question 2</td>
<td>Early Years, geography, music</td>
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<td>Mr B Brayford</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Key Question 3 and 5.</td>
<td>Science, history, religious education</td>
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<td>Ms A Dobbins</td>
<td>Peer assessor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs H Glover</td>
<td>Nominee</td>
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Acknowledgement

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

Contractor:
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Neath
SA10 6JQ