

**Inspection under Section 10 of the  
Schools Inspections Act 1996**

**Ysgol Borth-y-Gest  
Borth-y-Gest  
Porthmadog  
Gwynedd  
LL49 9UF**

**School Number: 6612015**

**Date of Inspection: 27/02/06**

**by**

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**The purpose of Estyn is to improve quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:**

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- \* secondary schools;
- \* special schools;
- \* pupil referral units;
- \* independent schools;
- \* further education;
- \* adult 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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Ysgol Borth-y-Gest was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Ysgol Borth-y-Gest took place between 27/02/06 and 28/02/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by David Martin Cray 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:

<b>Grade 1</b>	good with outstanding features
<b>Grade 2</b>	good features and no important shortcomings
<b>Grade 3</b>	good features outweigh shortcomings
<b>Grade 4</b>	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
<b>Grade 5</b>	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 short inspection."

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

Year	R	Y 1	Y 2	Y 3	Y 4	Y 5	Y 6
Ages	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y 13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

- 1 This primary school was established a century and a quarter ago. It is located in the village of Borth-y-Gest, near Porthmadog and serves the village itself, nearby Morfa Bychan and the surrounding rural hinterland. It is maintained by Gwynedd Local Education Authority. Tourism plays a major role in the life of the area, and overall it is described as being relatively prosperous. Pupils represent the full range of ability and their levels of attainment vary considerably when they are first admitted to school.
- 2 There are currently 81 pupils between 3 and 11 years of age on the school register, including eight nursery children. They are admitted on a part-time basis in the September following their third birthday and on a full-time basis following their fourth birthday. There has been a slight increase in pupil numbers over the last five years.
- 3 Three per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals – a figure that is considerably lower than county (12%) and national averages (19%). Seven pupils, (9%) are designated as having additional learning needs. No pupils have statements of their needs.
- 4 The percentage of pupils from homes where Welsh is spoken as a first language is no more than some 20%, a figure that is comparable to the situation when the school was last inspected in March 2000. The school follows the National Curriculum in Wales Welsh first language programme of study and it is adjudged by the school that some 80% of pupils are now able to speak Welsh to first language standard.
- 5 The headteacher has been in post since December 1996. Since the last inspection, one new member of staff has been appointed and during the inspection another member was away on maternity leave.

### The school's priorities and targets

- 6 The school's priorities and targets for 2005 – 2006 include:
  - reviewing the schemes of work for art and design and technology throughout the school;
  - reviewing the arrangements for field activities in the Humanities;
  - establishing a scheme and programme for Circle Time throughout the school;
  - reviewing the handwriting scheme throughout the school;
  - preparing for the Foundation Stage.

## Summary

- 7 The findings of the inspection team matched the judgement made by the school in five of the seven Key Questions. A lower grade was awarded for Key Question Five and a higher grade for Key Question Two.

### Table of grades awarded

- 8 The inspection team adjudged the work of the school as follows:

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

### Standards

- 9 Across the school, the pupils, including those with additional learning needs, achieve standards to which there are outstanding features in terms of their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- 10 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. They make good progress in the development of their mathematical and information technology skills across the curriculum. The development of their Welsh communication skills across the range of experiences is outstanding.
- 11 Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 achieve outstanding features in the use of their Welsh and English communication skills across the curriculum and a significant number are particularly eloquent. They achieve good standards in the use of their mathematical skills across the subjects, and the use they make of their information technology skills in a range of contexts is often outstanding.
- 12 Pupils' bilingual competence is an outstanding feature. In Key Stage 2, they come to be able to use their oracy, reading and writing skills in Welsh and



English in a range of curricular contexts, moving from one language to the other with ease.

- 13 In relation to similar schools in Wales in terms of the percentage of pupils receiving free school meals, pupils in both key stages are often within the highest performing group.
- 14 Pupils achieve outstanding standards in the development of their personal, social and learning skills. They display highly positive attitudes towards their work and show genuine interest in their lessons. They make highly effective use of their time and their motivation levels are very high across the age range.
- 15 Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they are very knowledgeable about the school's high expectations.
- 16 For the three full terms prior to the inspection, average attendance levels at the school were around 96%. Pupils arrive punctually at school in the morning.

### **The quality of education and training**

- 17 In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was adjudged to be as follows:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
57%	43%	--	--	--

- 18 The teachers successfully motivate the pupils to learn and they set an appropriate level of challenge for them as individual learners. In the lessons observed, purposeful and varied questioning was seen that stimulated appropriate responses by the pupils, and promoted their active participation. They employ a range of strategies to sustain the pupils, providing regular learning support through appropriate and timely intervention. They make effective use of a range of appropriate resources to support the learning.
- 19 The annual reports presented in the Summer Term conform fully to statutory requirements, and the comments give a clear indication of pupils' achievements in the National Curriculum subjects and the Six Areas of Learning in a way that is intelligible to parents.
- 20 The curriculum and the learning experiences provided by the school fulfil the needs of each pupil. It is broad and balanced, is often interesting, and is planned in a way that secures natural continuity and progression from one learning stage to the next. It conforms fully to statutory requirements.
- 21 The school's schemes of work in each curricular area clearly indicate how it plans to develop pupils' basic and key skills. This is one of the school's outstanding features.

- 22 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively promoted. The services of collective worship within individual classes and on a whole-school basis make a good contribution towards pupils' understanding of spiritual and moral issues.
- 23 The partnership with parents is outstanding and during the pre-inspection consultation, considerable satisfaction was expressed with the quality of communication and the relationship between the school and pupils' homes.
- 24 The school's numerous and varied links with the local community are an outstanding feature of its provision. It extends out into its community and pupils make very regular contributions to local events and institutions.
- 25 The emphasis placed by teachers on developing pupils into independent learners from an early age is one of the school's outstanding features. Pupils are encouraged to take full responsibility for many everyday matters within their classes. They are encouraged to develop problem solving skills and thinking skills, and this lays a good foundation for developing their enterprise skills at a later stage.
- 26 Pupils feel safe at school, and they receive outstanding support from teachers and other adults. Each pupil receives access to the programme of personal and social education, and there are appropriate arrangements in place for obtaining specialist support if required.
- 27 There are sound procedures in place for the early identification of pupils' additional learning needs, and the school works appropriately with local education authority agencies and with parents. There are purposeful individual education plans for every pupil on the special needs register. There is extensive consultation with parents when drawing up the plans and they are reviewed on a termly basis.
- 28 The school has sound systems for monitoring pupils' attendance and punctuality, and they are implemented consistently across the school. The strategies for promoting good behaviour are one of the school's outstanding features.
- 29 Healthy development, through the school's activities to attain 'Healthy School' status, is one of the school's outstanding features. Prominent attention is given to healthy eating, and the pupils often lead the way through class activities and the work of the School Council in encouraging changes.
- 30 The school promotes positive action to overcome any prejudice and presumptions based on gender, race, language or social background in order to promote diversity.

### **Leadership and management**

- 31 The headteacher provides, through example, a clear sense of purpose and strategic direction for the school's development. It operates in an atmosphere

of high expectations and all members of staff and governors are committed to the work of promoting high standards. It succeeds particularly well in this regard.

- 32 All members of staff have job descriptions that outline their responsibilities in detail. However, there is an element of imbalance in the distribution of responsibilities and there is room for the co-ordinators to play a more prominent role in the work of monitoring the various areas of responsibility than is currently the case. To date, the headteacher has been mainly responsible for the work of monitoring and evaluating standards and the quality of provision.
- 33 The governors provide good support to the headteacher in setting the strategic direction of the school, but they have not yet sufficiently familiarised themselves with the work of monitoring the quality of provision.
- 34 The school undertakes its responsibilities in terms of teaching time requirements, but there are some shortcomings in the annual report of the governing body to parents that means that it does not fully satisfy the requirements of Welsh Assembly Government Circular 15/01.
- 35 It was seen that self-evaluation procedures have been in place for some time and all members of the school community are committed to improvement.
- 36 The self-evaluation report presented to the inspectors is of very good quality. It is an evaluative document and is particularly open in its identification of the issues that require further development, in addition to current strengths. The school development plan provides very good strategic direction for the school and it is effectively linked to the contents of the self-evaluation document.
- 37 The findings of the inspection teach matched the judgement made by the school in five of the seven Key Questions. The need to further develop roles and responsibilities within the school's management structure is mainly responsible for the lower grade awarded for Key Question 5 and in Key Question 2, it was seen that the school has been too conservative in its evaluation of the quality of teaching.
- 38 The school has made good progress since the last inspection. However, more needs to be done to secure a more equitable distribution of responsibilities.
- 39 The school has an adequate number of teachers to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are taught effectively. Overall, there is a good supply of resources at the school for all ages; they are of good quality and are easily accessible for pupils' use.
- 40 Overall, the classrooms provide adequate space for the numbers of pupils they accommodate. However, the hall is of limited size and pupils must travel to the local leisure centre to fully satisfy the requirements of the physical education curriculum. The school also lacks sufficient green space. It is troublesome for the under-fives and the Key Stage 1 pupils housed

separately to the main building to have to move backwards and forwards for certain activities. Despite the restrictions, the teachers succeed in making good and effective use of what is available to them.

- 41 The buildings are in a fair condition, and they require an injection of funding, particularly so the refectory. The buildings are not wholly accessible to people with disabilities, and there are no designated disabled toilets.
- 42 The environment of the school is enhanced by tasteful and interesting displays that provide a pleasant learning environment for pupils that also facilitates their learning.
- 43 Financial management is tight and the school operates effectively within its budget. It provides very good value for money.

## **Recommendations**

In order to improve the areas inspected at the school, the staff and governors need to:

- R1: continue to sustain the existing high quality teaching and learning;
- R2: ensure a more balanced allocation of curricular and management responsibilities;
- R3: develop the roles of subject co-ordinators and the governing body in monitoring standards and the quality of provision;
- R4: ensure that the contents of the annual report of the governing body to parents fully meets the requirements.

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 1: Good with outstanding features**

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

- 45 Across the school, the pupils, including those with additional learning needs, achieve standards to which there are outstanding features in terms of their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- 46 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning. They make good progress in the development of their mathematical and information technology skills across the curriculum. The development of their Welsh communication skills across the range of experiences is outstanding.
- 47 Pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 achieve outstanding features in the use of their Welsh and English communication skills across the curriculum and a significant number are particularly eloquent. They achieve good standards in the use of their mathematical skills across the subjects, and the use they make of their information technology skills in a range of contexts is often outstanding.
- 48 Pupils' bilingual competence is an outstanding feature. In Key Stage 2, they come to be able to use their oracy, reading and writing skills in Welsh and English in a range of curricular contexts, moving from one language to the other with ease.
- 49 In Key Stage 1 in 2005, according to teachers' assessments, 100% of pupils attained level 2 or above in the core subjects of Welsh, mathematics and science. In 2004 the figure was again 100% (Wales 80%; Gwynedd 82%) and in 2003 it was 67% (Wales 79%; Gwynedd 79%). The school's results for 2005 were higher than county and national averages (2004) in all subjects.
- 50 In Key Stage 2 in 2005, according to teachers' assessments, 80% of pupils at the school attained level 4 or above in the core subjects of Welsh, English, mathematics and science. In 2004 it was 94% (Wales 72%; Gwynedd 76%) and in 2003 the figure was 100% (Wales 71%; Gwynedd 72%). The results for 2005 were higher than county and national averages (2004) in Welsh, English, mathematics and science.
- 51 Over time, there are no obvious patterns of difference in the performance of boys and girls in either key stage.
- 52 In relation to similar schools in Wales in terms of the percentage of pupils receiving free school meals, pupils in both key stages are often within the highest performing group.
- 53 In their lessons, it was seen that pupils learn new knowledge or skills to very good effect. They are aware of the strengths of their work, they can explain what they need to do to improve it and they make particularly good progress towards achieving their potential.
- 54 Pupils achieve outstanding standards in the development of their personal, social and learning skills. They display highly positive attitudes towards their

work and show genuine interest in their lessons. They make highly effective use of their time and their motivation levels are very high across the age range.

- 55 Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they are very knowledgeable about the school's high expectations. They are respectful and courteous towards their peers and adults. They make orderly and highly disciplined contributions to daily procedures and this responsible attitude has a very positive impact on their learning.
- 56 Pupils' creative skills are developing very well. The under-fives and pupils in Key Stage 1 exhibit a lively imagination in music lessons and the design and technology and artwork of pupils in Key Stage 2 is of a very high standard.
- 57 For the three full terms prior to the inspection, average attendance levels at the school were around 96%. Pupils arrive punctually at school in the morning.
- 58 The pupils' ability to work independently is an impressive feature. From an early age, they take considerable responsibility for organising their own work and the effect of this is apparent in the various projects produced by the older pupils at the school.
- 59 Pupils display respect, care and concern for others. They have a good awareness of equal opportunities and they respect the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and social and cultural traditions.
- 60 Pupils have a good awareness of the world of work through the various experiences they receive by visiting places of work, and by talking to visitors. They make a particularly good contribution to the life of their local community.

## The quality of education and training

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

- 61 The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report to the extent that the school awarded Grade 2 for this key question. The self-evaluation report has not fully recognised the teachers' ability to motivate pupils to develop into mature independent learners.
- 62 The quality of teaching was adjudged to be as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
57%	43%	---	---	---

- 63 The teachers successfully motivate the pupils to learn and they set an appropriate level of challenge for them as individual learners. In the lessons observed, the outstanding and good features to the teaching include clear and

purposeful planning, thorough preparation in terms of information and resources, appropriate and extensive tasks that are effectively differentiated, varied, interesting presentations and clear explanations when setting tasks.

- 64 The teachers display thorough subject knowledge. In the lessons observed, purposeful and varied questioning was seen that stimulated appropriate responses by the pupils, and promoted their active participation. They employ a range of strategies to sustain the pupils, providing regular learning support through appropriate and timely intervention. They make effective use of a range of appropriate resources to support the learning.
- 65 They plan effectively in the short-term, and ensure that the requirements of the mid-term schemes of work are fulfilled, whilst at the same time being flexible enough to respond to pupils' individual needs.
- 66 There are excellent working relationships to be seen across all classes. Teachers are aware of the needs of the individual pupil; they target appropriate support and differentiate tasks in order to fulfil those needs. They show respect towards pupils and their work, and this is reflected in pupils' own attitudes towards each other and to their work.
- 67 The school's equal opportunities policy is implemented in full and each individual, regardless of race, gender or disability are considered as equal, and are respected according to their abilities, talents and achievements.
- 68 Pupils' linguistic needs are met in full, and the work of developing bilingualism is an outstanding feature of the life of the school.
- 69 The teachers operate effective assessment procedures across the curriculum. In addition to teachers' termly assessments in the core subjects and their annual assessments in the foundation subjects, standardised tests are used in language and mathematics. The assessment records enable teachers to track the progress of each individual pupil throughout his or her time at the school.
- 70 To assist with the assessment work, the school develops subject-based portfolios of work that has been levelled. Pupils' work and published exemplar material are used, and the portfolios are checked by local education authority subject specialists. This work makes a positive contribution towards strengthening the pupils' understanding of the requirements of different levels across the curriculum.
- 71 Pupils' work is marked regularly and supportive and constructive comments are offered in order to assist them to understand how to improve their work. Appropriate targets are set in order to secure progress.
- 72 The school presents written reports to parents on two occasions during the year and parents are invited to school to discuss them on both occasions. The school also produces a 'Progress Portrait' for each pupil in the Autumn Term that outlines the progress made during the term, and suggests a way forward. The annual reports presented in the Summer Term fully conform to

statutory requirements, and the comments give a clear indication of the pupils' achievements in the National Curriculum subjects and in the Six Areas of Learning, in a way that is intelligible to parents. Parents are appreciative of the reports.

**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**

- 73 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 74 The overall quality of the educational provision for the under-fives is appropriate to their needs and the children make good progress towards the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning.
- 75 The curriculum and the learning experiences provided by the school fulfil the needs of each pupil. It is broad and balanced, is often interesting, and is planned in a way that secures natural continuity and progression from one learning stage to the next. It conforms fully to statutory requirements.
- 76 The school's schemes of work in each curricular area clearly indicate how it plans to develop pupils' basic and key skills. This is one of the school's outstanding features.
- 77 The school fulfils the requirements of the 'Framework for Personal and Social Education', and gives appropriate attention to all aspects in specific lessons as well as by weaving a number of aspects into activities across the curriculum. Circle Time is used effectively to provide pupils with opportunities to investigate feelings and to respond to situations in a safe and secure environment. The school is in the process of strengthening the structure in order to obtain greater clarity in the planning of activities.
- 78 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively promoted. The services of collective worship within individual classes and on a whole-school basis make a good contribution towards pupils' understanding of spiritual and moral issues. The school organises events such as Christmas concerts in the community and plays an active role in Urdd Gobaith Cymru activities at a local and national level.
- 79 The partnership with parents is outstanding and during the pre-inspection consultation, considerable satisfaction was expressed with the quality of communication and the relationship between the school and pupils' homes. Parents are highly knowledgeable about the life and work of the school. They respond positively to fund-raising activities, and provide support for teachers as required. Both the home-school agreement and the parents' handbook fulfil statutory requirements.



- 80 There are good links with other catchment schools and the pastoral arrangements for the transition to the secondary school are organised effectively.
- 81 The school's numerous and varied links with the local community are an outstanding feature of its provision. It extends out into its community and pupils make very regular contributions to local events and institutions.
- 82 Pupils receive good experiences that increase their awareness of the world of work. They include visits by speakers and visits to local shops and businesses, together with activities that are linked to various projects.
- 83 The way in which pupils' bilingual skills are promoted is an outstanding feature, and this is reflected in pupils' ability from an early age to work confidently in both languages. Good attention is given to the Cwricwlwm Cymreig in class activities, in extra-curricular activities and in community-based activities. It is also apparent in the school's schemes of work.
- 84 Although the school does not have a written policy, sustainability is given a high priority, and considerable emphasis is placed on appropriate activities to promote this area of activity. Extensive use is made of recycling bins, and the school has promoted activities to raise the awareness of pupils and their parents of the need to reduce waste and pollution and to safeguard the environment. The school also effectively promotes the pupils' awareness of global citizenship through activities within the programme of personal and social education, morning assemblies and extra-curricular activities such as concerts to raise money for good causes. The school is developing links with India through the Grail Trust charity, and curricular links are in hand with children from Spain.
- 85 The emphasis placed by teachers on developing pupils into independent learners from an early age is one of the school's outstanding features. Pupils are encouraged to take full responsibility for many everyday matters within their classes. They are encouraged to develop problem solving skills and thinking skills, and this lays a good foundation for developing their enterprise skills at a later stage. Older pupils at the school are given the responsibility of managing all aspects of the school fruit shop.

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

- 86 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 87 The school is a highly caring community where pupils receive every care and support. The quality of the relationships amongst pupils, and between pupils and teachers and other adults is outstanding.

- 88 Pupils feel safe at school and they receive outstanding support from teachers and other adults. New pupils settle in quickly in the nursery/reception class, and they transfer easily to Key Stage 1 when they share lessons for certain periods every week.
- 89 The teachers know each individual pupil very well and they all receive the appropriate support in accordance with their needs. Each pupil receives access to the programme of personal and social education, and there are appropriate arrangements in place to provide specialist support if required.
- 90 There are currently seven pupils on the special needs register and they receive appropriate support in response to their specific needs. There are sound procedures in place for the early identification of pupils' additional learning needs and the school works appropriately with local education authority agencies and with parents. There are purposeful individual education plans for every pupil on the special needs register. There is extensive consultation with parents when drawing up the plans and they are reviewed on a termly basis. Overall, these pupils are supported through appropriate differentiated activities within regular class activity, but some of the pupils in Key Stage 2 receive individual attention, or in small groups, by a designated peripatetic teacher, focussing on language development and literacy.
- 91 The school has sound systems for monitoring pupils' attendance and punctuality, and they are implemented consistently across the school. The strategies for promoting good behaviour are one of the school's outstanding features.
- 92 Healthy development, through the school's activities to attain 'Healthy School' status, is one of the school's outstanding features. Prominent attention is given to healthy eating and the pupils often lead the way through class activities and the work of the School Council in encouraging changes. The school places great emphasis on the pupils' safety and well-being, issues that receive outstanding attention by teachers and other adults.
- 93 There is a clear and sound policy on child protection in place, and all members of staff are aware of the requirements and procedures.
- 94 The school promotes positive action to overcome any prejudice and presumptions based on gender, race, language or social background in order to promote diversity in accordance with the guidelines contained in the school's equality policy. All individuals are treated equally, and the school ensures that no pupil is placed under any disadvantage. The school has produced an accessibility plan in accordance with the requirements of Welsh Assembly Government circular 15/2004.

## **Leadership and management**

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

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

- 95 The findings of the inspection team differ from the school's judgement in its self-evaluation report to the extent that the school awarded Grade 1 for this key question. A lower grade was awarded by the inspectors primarily because of the need to further develop roles and responsibilities within the school's management structure.
- 96 The headteacher provides, through example, a clear sense of purpose and strategic direction for the school's development. It operates in an atmosphere of high expectations and all members of staff and governors are committed to the work of promoting high standards. It succeeds particularly well in this regard.
- 97 All members of staff have job descriptions that outline their responsibilities in detail. However, there is an element of imbalance in the distribution of responsibilities and there is room for the co-ordinators to play a more prominent role in the work of monitoring the various areas of responsibility than is currently the case.
- 98 There is a range of good quality curricular and management policies in place and they are implemented consistently.
- 99 Very good consideration is given to Welsh Assembly Government priorities, together with those linked to the Gwynedd Education Strategic Plan when planning for the development of the school. It has already gained 'Healthy School' accreditation, the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark for the second time, and has co-operated on projects under the aegis of the Rural Education Initiatives.
- 100 Cyclical whole-school targets are set according to requirements. They are challenging but achievable and are based on the school's knowledge of its pupils and their likely performance.
- 101 Appropriate performance management arrangements have been established and the objectives set promote the ongoing professional development of staff whilst at the same time addressing the school's own priorities. The newly qualified teacher is well supported by the headteacher and all other members of staff.
- 102 There are good arrangements in place to meet the teachers' workload requirements.
- 103 The governors know the school well and in general they undertake their duties effectively. They have a good range of backgrounds and experience, and they visit the school on an occasional basis. They provide good support to the headteacher in setting the strategic direction of the school, but they have not yet sufficiently familiarised themselves with the work of monitoring the quality of provision.
- 104 The school undertakes its responsibilities in terms of teaching time requirements, but there are some shortcomings in the annual report of the

governing body to parents that means that it does not fully satisfy the requirements of Welsh Assembly Government Circular 15/01.

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

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

- 105 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 106 It was seen that self-evaluation procedures have been in place for some time and that all members of the school community are committed to improvement. The arrangements are implemented systematically and they are based on a good body of evidence. Detailed records are kept, although there is sometimes the tendency for them to be over descriptive.
- 107 To date, the headteacher has been mainly responsible for the work of monitoring and evaluating standards and the quality of provision. It is acknowledged in the school's self-evaluation report that there is a need to further develop the role of subject co-ordinators, a view with which the inspectors concur.
- 108 Data on pupils' levels of attainment is effectively analysed and there is a good level of awareness of how the school is performing in county and national contexts.
- 109 Although there are no formal arrangements to gather parents' views, the school operates in an open manner and is very happy to consider the views of others interested in its work.
- 110 The self-evaluation report presented to the inspectors is of very good quality. It is an evaluative document and is particularly open in its identification of the issues that require further development, in addition to current strengths.
- 111 The school development plan provides very good strategic direction for the school and is fully supported by staff and governors. It contains a valuable appraisal of the priorities for the previous year and the priorities for this year and beyond are effectively linked to the contents of the self-evaluation document. Current priorities are addressed under a series of appropriate headings that facilitate ease of monitoring.
- 112 The findings of the school matched the judgement of the inspection team in five of the seven Key Questions. Issues relating to roles mainly account for the lower grade awarded for Key Question 5 and in Key Question 2, it was seen that the school had been too conservative in its evaluation of the quality of teaching.
- 113 The school has made good progress since the last inspection. However, more needs to be done to secure a more equitable distribution of responsibilities.

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

### **Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

- 114 The findings of the inspection team match the judgement made by the school in its self-evaluation report.
- 115 The school has an adequate number of teachers to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are taught effectively. The teachers are well-versed in the areas they teach and they update their curricular knowledge and their teaching skills by following county and local training programmes. There is good co-operation between the under-fives' teacher and the nursery assistant.
- 116 Overall, there is a good supply of resources at the school for all ages; they are of good quality and are easily accessible for pupils' use. There is a good number of computers, together with interactive whiteboards, that are used regularly.
- 117 Pupils benefit from the contribution of visitors who share their experiences and from educational visits to enhance their learning.
- 118 Overall, the classrooms provide adequate space for the numbers of pupils they accommodate. However, the hall is of limited size and pupils must travel to the local leisure centre to fully satisfy the requirements of the physical education curriculum. The school also lacks sufficient green space. It is troublesome for the under-fives and the Key Stage 1 pupils housed separately to the main building to have to move backwards and forwards for certain activities. Despite the restrictions, the teachers succeed in making good and effective use of what is available to them.
- 119 The buildings are in a fair condition, and they require an injection of funding, particularly so the refectory. The buildings are not wholly accessible to people with disabilities, and there are no designated disabled toilets.
- 120 The environment of the school is enhanced by tasteful and interesting displays that provide a pleasant learning environment for pupils that also facilitates their learning.
- 121 Financial management is tight and the school operates effectively within its budget. The headteacher and governing body monitor expenditure to very good effect and the school provides very good value for money.

### **School's response to the inspection**

The report received is highly praiseworthy and identifies a number of outstanding features in the life of the school. The governors and staff take pride in the fact that the inspectors found the school to be a highly caring community where pupils receive outstanding care and support. The school accepts the inspection findings as being highly positive and is proud that pupils' standards of achievement together with the standards of teaching are of the highest order.

The school is pleased that the inspectors commend the pupils' bilingual skills throughout the school, and that it is not possible to distinguish between first and second language pupils.

The school is particularly pleased that the inspectors identified and noted the outstanding partnership that exists between everyone involved in supporting the life and work of the school. The school also appreciates the reference made to the close relationship between the school and the local community.

## Appendix A

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Borth-y-Gest
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	3-11 years
Address of school	Borth-y-Gest Porthmadog Gwynedd
Post-code	LL49 9UF
Telephone number	(01766) 513285
Headteacher	Mrs Mair Millar
Date of appointment	December 1996
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr Gwilym Jones
Reporting inspector	Mr D M Cray
Dates of inspection	27-28 February 2006

## Appendix B

### School data and indicators

Number of pupils in each year group									
Year group	N (fte)	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Number of pupils	4	11	12	6	9	13	9	13	77

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	3	1	3.7

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding nursery and special classes)	20:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in nursery classes	9:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	--
Average class size, excluding nursery and special classes	20
Teacher (fte): class ratio	1:1

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to inspection			
Term	N	R	Rest of school
Spring 2005	95.1%	91.5%	94.2%
Summer 2005	96.2%	93.1%	97.2%
Autumn	95.2%	93.5%	96.2%

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	3%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	0

## Appendix C

### National Curriculum Assessment Results: End of Key Stage 1

<b>National Curriculum Assessment KS1 Results 2005</b>	Number of pupils in Y2	8
As the number of pupils eligible for assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 was greater than four but fewer than 10, overall performance indicators only are included		

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 2 in mathematics, science and English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	100%	In Wales	80%

### National Curriculum Assessment Results: End of Key Stage 2

<b>National Curriculum Assessment KS2 Results 2005</b>		Number of pupils in Y6	10
<b>Percentage of pupils at each level</b>			
			D A F W 1 2 3 4 5 4+
English	Teacher assessment	School	
		National	1
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School	
		National	1
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	
		National	1
Science	Teacher assessment	School	
		National	1

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 4 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language) according to teacher assessment			
In the school	80%	In Wales	72%

- D Pupils who are exempted 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 D

### Evidence base of the inspection

Three inspectors spent a total of five inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

- seventeen lessons or part lessons;
- all classes;
- acts of collective worship; and
- a range of extra curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection began; and



- senior managers, teachers, support and administrative staff and groups of pupils during the inspection.

The team also considered:

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

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

## Appendix E

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Inspector	Type	Aspects
Mr D M Cray	Rgl	Context; Summary; Recommendations; Annexes; Key questions 1; 5; 6 and 7.
Mr Terwyn Tomos	Team	Key questions 2; 3; 4.
Mr Wil Owen	Lay	Contributions to key questions 1; 3; 4 and 7

**School's Nominee:** Mrs Mair Millar

**Contractor:** Arolygiadau Deheubarth Inspections; Afallon; Heol Llandeilo; Gorslas; Llanelli; SA14 7LU.

### Acknowledgement

The visiting inspectors wish to thank the governors, the head and all the staff for the co-operation and courtesy they received during the inspection.