

**REPORT**

**on the**

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10 OF  
THE SCHOOL INSPECTION ACT 1996**

**YSGOL BRYN ELIAN  
WINDSOR DRIVE  
OLD COLWYN  
COLWYN BAY  
LL29 8HU**

School Number: 662/5403

Date of Inspection: 30 September – 4 October 2002

**By**

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Registered Inspector W098/3292

Under Estyn contract number: T/12/02

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## **CURRICULUM NOMENCLATURE AND KEY STAGES**

A new nomenclature to describe pupils' progress through school was introduced in 1989. This system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to age 18 is intended to ease communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs and emphasise the importance of continuity.

The term "Reception" (R) is applied to the year group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) who attain the age of 5 during the academic year "Year 1" (Y1) is applied to the year group of pupils who attain the age of 6 during the academic year and so on to Y13 the year group who attain the age of 18 during the academic year:

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Years	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

Key stage 1 of the national curriculum consists of Y1 and Y2; KS2 of Y3 to Y6; KS3 of Y7 to Y9; KS4 of Y10 and Y11 (which is the final year of compulsory education).

## **GRADE DESCRIPTIONS**

The five-point grading scale used to represent the main judgements in this report is as follows:

1. Very good: many good features, some of them outstanding.
2. Good: good features and no major shortcomings.
3. Satisfactory: good features outweigh shortcomings.
4. Unsatisfactory: some satisfactory work but shortcomings in important areas.
5. Poor: many shortcomings.

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## **1. CONTEXT**

### **The school and its priorities**

Ysgol Bryn Elian is an 11-18 co-educational comprehensive school, with Foundation status. It is one of two main English-medium schools serving the tourist resort of Colwyn Bay and the surrounding small towns and semi-rural districts. Virtually all pupils come from homes where English is the dominant language. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is less than one per cent.

The 930 pupils, with slightly more boys than girls on roll, has increased by over 15% since the last inspection in 1997 and includes a sixth form of 100 students, which is a third larger. A number of pupils travel from beyond the defined catchment, having expressed a preference for the school.

The school occupies an attractively situated tiered, hillside site. The intake is fully comprehensive. Pupils come from the full range of economic and social backgrounds, including a significant proportion from backgrounds which are socially and/or financially disadvantaged. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 19%, is below the Welsh average of 22%.

The school houses a special education unit on site for 12 pupils on the school roll who have statements for severe learning difficulties, which is staffed and resourced by the LEA. A further 50 pupils have statements of special educational needs, which is an above average proportion for the total roll. A further 128 pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs.

The proportion of pupils choosing to stay in full-time education beyond the age of 16, 80%, compares very favourably with similar schools.

The school's published mission statement, 'to provide a first class learning experience for its pupils through well qualified teachers in a well ordered environment and, through its caring ethos and fully comprehensive ideals, prepare all pupils thoroughly to meet the challenge that will face them in adult life, and in doing so to serve its community', is to be achieved through nine clearly related aims, which are underpinned by a range of policies and the detail of the school development plan.

## **2. MAIN FINDINGS**

### **The main findings of the report**

- Bryn Elian is a successful school, which has shown itself capable of continuous development and improvement in the past five years and has developed a distinctive ethos. It is now popular and serves its community well.
- The standards achieved by pupils are at least satisfactory in 97% classes and good or better in 66%. Very good standards are achieved in 7% of lessons and these occur in all

key stages. These figures exceed the targets set by the National Assembly for the year 2002. (The standards of achievement in 95% of classes should be at least satisfactory and 50% good or better). Standards in KS3 and 4 are fairly even, with 57% in KS3 and 63% in KS4 lessons good or very good. In the sixth form the figure was 91%. The proportion of good or better standards in classes has risen considerably in each key stage since the previous inspection.

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Key Stage 3</i>	<i>Key Stage 4</i>	<i>Sixth Form</i>
English	Good	Good	Very Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good	Good
Welsh	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Design & technology (DT)	Good	Good	Good
Information technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	* Satisfactory
History	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Geography	Good	Good	Good
Modern foreign languages	Good	Good	Good
Art	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Music	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	-
Physical education (PE)	Satisfactory	Good	-
Physical education GCSE/A Level	-	Good	* Good
Religious education (RE)	Good	Satisfactory	-
Religious studies (RS)	-	-	Satisfactory
Personal, social & health education (PSHE)	Good	Good	Good
Health & social care	-	-	Good
Environmental science	-	-	Good
Drama	-	Good	-
Expressive & performing arts	-	Good	Good
Business economics	-	-	Good
Psychology	-	-	* Good
Sociology	-	-	* Good
Law	-	-	* Satisfactory

\* Taught by consortium partners

- At the end of KS3 National Curriculum (NC) tests in 2002, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above in English, mathematics and science was above national averages. In science it was well above and shows continuing improvement. The percentage of pupils gaining Level 5 or above in all three subjects, the core subject indicator (CSI), was 60%. This is 10% higher than the national average. Overall, these figures are an improvement since the previous inspection.
- GCSE results have generally improved since the last inspection. In 1996 41% of pupils gained 5 or more grades A\*-C. In 2002, 98% of pupils were entered for 5 or more subjects, a very high entry rate compared with Welsh and local figures. The proportion gaining 5 or more A\*-C grades, 54% is in line with local and national figures. Five or more grades A\*-G were achieved by 97% of candidates, much higher than local and national figures. The CSI, the percentage gaining grades A\*-C in all 3 subjects, English, mathematics and science, is above local and national averages. Girls' performances,

60%, 5 or more A\*-C grades, in common with national trends, were better than those of the boys, 48.5%. These results demonstrate positive progress overall.

- Standards are good in the sixth form. In the 2002 A level examinations, the proportion of students achieving 2 or more grades A-C was below 2001 local and national averages. The proportion gaining 2 or more grades A-E exceeded local and national averages. The average points score, 17, is just below local and national figures for 2001.
- Progress generally is even across the school. Pupils of all ability make mainly good progress in all subjects in each key stage. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve good standards across the curriculum.
- These results indicate that the school provides good added value to its intake as it progresses through the school.
- Standards of speaking and listening are good across the curriculum. Almost all pupils listen well and show that they have understood. They respond willingly to questions, mainly using specialist words correctly. Most are articulate and confident. They respond well when given opportunities for small group work.
- Reading skills are mainly good and develop very well in response to the school's initiatives. Pupils can scan, skim and compare sources and select what is relevant. Research skills develop appropriately in a range of subjects and media. A good proportion read keenly for pleasure.
- Standards in writing are predominantly good. Good opportunities are provided to produce well crafted writing in a full range of subjects. Extended work is adapted for different purposes and audiences. Drafting and revision generally enhance accuracy.
- Standards of numeracy are good overall. Many subjects develop mathematical skills in their schemes. Calculators are used appropriately on many occasions.
- Standards in ICT are satisfactory. Its use is developing in a wider range of subjects. Work is carried out in word processing and control. Use is made of spreadsheets, the internet and CD Roms for research, modelling and information and retrieval. A coordinator has been newly appointed to oversee more consistent planning, access and exploitation across the curriculum.
- Sixth form students have good capability and commitment to developing a comprehensive range of ICT skills.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

- The ethos of the school reflects clearly shared values in a warm and welcoming environment, where pupils can develop their potential.
- Pupils' spiritual development is good. Many subject areas provide opportunities to gain understanding of other people's cultures and beliefs, and by instilling a sense of curiosity, about the purpose of life.
- School assemblies are well organised and are broadly of Christian character. Themes are effectively related to contemporary moral issues.
- Pupils' moral development is good. A strength is the school's commitment to social inclusion. The vast majority of pupils respond positively to the trust shown in them, treating teachers, each other and the environment with respect. They develop a sense of right and wrong. Moral issues, racism and other forms of prejudice are discussed and challenged. Concern and a sense of responsibility are shown in support for a wide range of charities. The Impetus Award, a national citizenship award, has recently been gained by a number of individual pupils.

- Pupils' social development is very good. It is developed through a very extensive range of activities in the school and the local community. The number of pupils succeeding in the Duke of Edinburgh Award is unusually high. The school council has proved a good vehicle for pupils to exercise responsibility and contribute to the school's ethos and life. Sixth form students are good role models. They respond well to many opportunities to exercise responsibility, including helping younger pupils in many ways. Pupils of all ages are involved in a wide range of local and national competitions which widen horizons. Large number of pupils prepare, organise and present activities through the house system.
- Pupils' cultural development is good. A very good range of extra-curricular activities and visits extends their cultural knowledge and understanding both locally and further afield. European and international awareness is well developed through subjects as well as links with France and Germany. Multi-cultural education is reflected in many aspects of work. Awareness of Wales and its culture has been developed well in most subjects since the last inspection.
- Attendance is satisfactory and improved since the last inspection. Good attendance is a clear expectation.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and contributes to the ethos and quality of life in the school. The school is a lively but orderly and civilised community where customs and procedures are well established.

### **Quality of education**

- The quality of teaching has improved overall since the previous inspection and has become a major strength of the school. It contributes significantly to pupils' achievements. It is at least satisfactory in 98% of classes and good or better in 77%. In 10% of classes there is very good teaching and this occurs in all key stages. In KS3, 70% of teaching is good or better. In KS4, 76% is good or better. In the sixth form, the figure is 95%.
- A high proportion of the good or very good teaching occurs in almost every subject across the whole school. The consistency of good and very good teaching is a strength and shows many examples of good practice.
- The quality of teaching is good in all subjects in each key stage and in the sixth form.
- Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is good. Classroom organisation is good. Lessons are well planned. Classes are mainly well managed. Good sequences of activities and resources maintain interest, develop understanding and self-confidence. Skilful questioning often drives learning. On many occasions, pupils develop their understanding through discussion, but on occasion they are not sufficiently encouraged to overcome difficulties for themselves, together, or to use their initiative.
- The range of teaching techniques used in lessons is mainly good, but many classrooms are small for the large numbers in some classes and this often restricts the range of strategies and flexible groupings which can be adopted.
- Activities are well adapted to provide pupils with different abilities with realistic challenge. The match of activities to pupils' previous attainments and needs is good. Teachers consistently use information from day-to-day assessment to plan future work.
- In virtually all classrooms, very good relationships motivate pupils.
- The quality of assessment, recording and reporting is good. Constructive and accurate marking includes helpful written comments, and indicates how further progress may be made. Pupils have opportunities to reflect on their progress and to set targets.

- Overall accurate records are kept. Half termly reviews enable progress to be effectively monitored.
- There is a well organised system for developing pupils' Records of Achievement. Pupils give much time, thought and care to their personal statements.
- Parents receive one full report each year plus an interim report. These give constructive and positive statements on achievements, progress and study skills, are usually subject specific and outline strengths and weaknesses.
- Good use is made of available data to identify those pupils needing extra support on entering Y7. Good use is made of attainment records to identify relative underachievement and to set realistic targets both for individual pupils and subject areas.
- Overall the reporting system has improved since the last inspection and is now good.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. The quality and range of provision for pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN, is good.
- There are good arrangements for social inclusion.
- Pupils with literacy problems are given valuable additional help by sixth form students and parent volunteers. Opportunities and support are given to extend the most able pupils.
- In KS4, a good range of options ensures considerable flexibility and choice. Good modifications to the mainstream curriculum have helped to improve motivation and attendance.
- A wide range of courses is available post-16. Good cooperative arrangements with local schools and college effectively extend the options available to students. Very good provision is made for key skills. Overall curricular provision in the sixth form is very good.
- Planning for the key skills of literacy and numeracy is good; ICT planning has been adversely affected by staffing difficulties.
- Planning for the Cwricwlwm Cymreig is satisfactory overall.
- There is a very well planned PHSE programme which meets the needs of each pupil as identified in ACCAC guidelines.
- Work experience is well organised for all pupils in Y10 and Y12.
- Extra-curricular provision is very good. There is an extensive range of sporting, musical, regular subject and other clubs available to pupils. Many teachers give valuable additional support in their own time to pupils preparing for examinations.
- The quality of support and guidance and procedures for promoting pupils' welfare are good and are strengths of the school. Child protection measures are very good. The pastoral system clearly demonstrates concern for welfare and for the establishment of a secure environment where hard work and mutual support are valued.
- Provision for pupils with SEN is good. Very good support has been successful in creating an ethos where all pupils can integrate in accordance with their educational and social ability.
- Partnerships with parents and the community are good; partnerships with other schools and institutions are very good.
- The range of links and partnerships makes a very valuable contribution to the school's ethos and pupils' development. The school is outward looking and aware of its responsibility both to its local and the wider community.
- The school's partnership with industry is good. The school has made considerable progress in attracting sponsorship and support from business, commerce and industry, in an area with limited large scale opportunities.

## Management

- The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is very good. There is a clear focus on raising standards and continuous improvement. The culture is firmly embedded at various levels in the school's structure and in informal groupings.
- The school reviews aspects of its performance through national benchmarks and externally validated standards.
- Procedures to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's progress and activity are firmly in place.
- The school fulfils its sound statement of mission and declared aims well. There is a very good understanding of whole school issues and a focus on raising achievement and developing a responsible community.
- The governing body is well informed, contains a wide range of expertise for the school's benefit and has been actively committed to the improved success of the school. They monitor and review the progress of developments and targets conscientiously.
- The school is very well organised overall.
- The headteacher has provided very effective, steady leadership and has overseen the school's rapid change, progress, improved ethos and popularity. In this he has been very well supported by his senior team who have a clear sense of direction and understanding of effecting improvement and by staff at all levels in the school.
- Teaching and non-teaching staff work well together.
- The quality of management of the leadership group and of those with whole school responsibilities is good.
- The school successfully manages its caretaking, grounds maintenance and catering in-house.
- The financial management of the school is very good. Planning is closely related to the priorities of the school development plan.
- Statutory requirements are met.
- The school gives good value for money.
- Well coordinated staff development is related to the school's needs, identified in the school development plan and the needs identified by individuals and departments.
- The school is well served by its non-teaching staff.
- Accommodation is mostly in good condition and has been improved and extended since the last inspection. It is only just sufficient to meet the pastoral and curricular needs for the increased roll. Many rooms are small in relation to the large size of some classes.
- The school successfully provides a secure, positive learning environment.
- Decorations and displays which celebrate the ethos and achievements of the school and pupils, are used to good effect.
- The quantity and quality of resources across the school are generally good. IT resources are good, with recently updated and extended facilities. The ratio of pupils to computers is good at 4.5:1.
- The recent learning resource centre is a valuable, popular addition to the provision, and is very effectively managed by the librarian. The ratio of books to pupils is good; it almost matches the recommended 13:1. Borrowing levels, 2000 a year, are good. The library is used well and is available to pupils outside the school day.

## Progress since the last inspection

The previous report identified eight key issues. Progress has been made in addressing each key issue. Progress has been very good in one issue, good in six and satisfactory in one.

### 3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### 3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

The standards achieved by pupils are at least satisfactory in 97% classes and good or better in 66%. Very good standards are achieved in 7% of lessons and these occur in all key stages. These figures exceed the targets set by the National Assembly for the year 2002. (The standards of achievement in 95% of classes should be at least satisfactory and 50% good or better). Standards in KS3 and 4 are fairly even, with 57% in KS3 and 63% in KS4 lessons good or very good. In the sixth form the figure was 91%. The proportion of good or better standards in classes has risen considerably in each key stage since the previous inspection.

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Information technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	* Satisfactory
History	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Geography	Good	Good	Good
Modern foreign languages	Good	Good	Good
Art	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Music	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	-
Physical education (PE)	Satisfactory	Good	-
Physical education GCSE/A Level	-	Good	* Good
Religious education (RE)	Good	Satisfactory	-
Religious studies (RS)	-	-	Satisfactory
Personal, social & health education (PSHE)	Good	Good	Good
Health & social care	-	-	Good
Environmental science	-	-	Good
Drama	-	Good	-
Expressive & performing arts	-	Good	Good
Business economics	-	-	Good
Psychology	-	-	* Good
Sociology	-	-	* Good
Law	-	-	* Satisfactory

\* Taught by consortium partners

At the end of KS3 NC tests in 2002, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 or above in English, mathematics and science was above national averages. In science it was well above and shows continuing improvement. The percentage of pupils gaining Level 5 or above in all three subjects, the core subject indicator (CSI), was 60%. This is 10% higher than the national average. Overall, these figures are an improvement since the previous inspection.

GCSE results have generally improved since the last inspection. In 1996 41% of pupils gained 5 or more grades A\*-C. In 2002, 98% of pupils were entered for 5 or more subjects, a very high entry rate compared with Welsh and local figures. The proportion gaining 5 or more A\*-C grades, 54%, is in line with local and national figures. Five or more grades A\*-G were achieved by 97% of candidates, much higher than local and national figures. The CSI, the percentage gaining grades A\*-C in all 3 subjects, English, mathematics and science, is above local and national averages. Girls' performances, 60%, 5 or more A\*-C grades, in common with national trends, were better than those of the boys, 48.5%. The school is reviewing strategies to raise achievements and those of the boys in particular. These results demonstrate positive progress overall.

Standards are good in the sixth form. In the 2002 A level examinations, the proportion of students achieving 2 or more grades A-C was below 2001 local and national averages. The proportion gaining 2 or more grades A-E exceeded local and national averages. The average points score, 17, is just below local and national figures for 2001.

Progress generally is even across the school. Pupils of all ability make mainly good progress in all subjects in each key stage. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve good standards across the curriculum.

These results indicate that the school provides good added value to its intake as it progresses through the school.

### **3.2 Standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum**

Standards of achievement in the key skills of communication and numeracy are good. In ICT they are satisfactory. There is little incidental use of spoken Welsh in the daily life of the school.

#### *Communication*

Oral skills are good in almost all subjects across the curriculum. Most pupils are articulate and confident. They mainly respond well and readily to teachers' questions. Many can provide extended, thoughtful and perceptive contributions, using specialist terminology and key words correctly. They pose pertinent questions and develop their ideas well through talk, with increasing clarity and maturity as they move through the school. Virtually all pupils are courteous, including in disagreement. Effective group and pair work is a feature of many lessons but, on occasions, this is over-structured.

Almost all pupils listen well to teachers, to audio visual resources and each other and demonstrate that they have understood what they have heard. A minority, mainly lower ability pupils in Y8, 9 and 10, do not listen carefully and are easily distracted.

Reading skills are mainly good and develop very well in response to the school's initiatives and effective support. The great majority of pupils can read aloud fluently and confidently from a range of materials. They can skim, scan and compare sources for information, select what is relevant and organise their work. Location and research skills develop appropriately in a range of subjects from magazines, text and reference books, CD ROMs and the internet. The use of the school library is well developed. A good proportion of pupils read keenly for pleasure.

In writing, standards of achievement are predominantly good. In a full range of subjects, good opportunities are provided to develop well-crafted writing. Pupils produce relevant, well organised and extended work, adapting their tone and style to suit the intended purpose and audience. They take pride in their written work which is well presented. They are trained to draft, edit and revise their work so that accuracy of spelling and punctuation is generally good in final drafts.

### *Numeracy*

Standards in numeracy across the curriculum are good overall.

Pupils and students develop good skills of numeracy in their mathematics lessons. They benefit from the time devoted to teaching numeracy and from regular practice of mathematical skills.

A numeracy policy was produced by the mathematics department. An audit of the use of numeracy across all subjects has been carried out, advice has been given and discussions occur at half-termly meetings chaired by the coordinator.

Many subjects use mathematical skills within their schemes of work. Examples of the use of these mathematical skills include:-

- Analysis of data and use of graphs in English, science, Welsh, geography, DT, music and economics.
- Shape and space in PE, DT and art.
- Measurement of time, length, weight, area, volume etc. in PE, DT, history, art, modern foreign languages, and science.
- Spreadsheets (formulae and number) are used in ICT.

Calculators are used appropriately in many subject areas and on many occasions.

### *Information and communications technology*

Standards of achievement are satisfactory.

Pupils are beginning to use a wider range of ICT in a variety of subject areas. Interesting work is undertaken in DT in the area of control, and pupils demonstrate effective use of word processing in English, Welsh, history, geography, modern foreign languages and drama. Pupils also make use of spreadsheets, the internet and CD Roms for research, modelling and information retrieval within some subjects. Although several departments have planned ICT into their programmes of study, its potential to aid and extend learning in an accessible, consistently planned and co-ordinated manner has yet to be realised.

## **Sixth form Key Skills Course**

Students handle information effectively through the use of appropriate software packages. They have a sound understanding and knowledge of the basic theory relating to computer systems and a very positive commitment to developing a comprehensive range of ICT skills through their project development.

They have good capability in integrating software packages, making use of the internet and other sources of information when carrying out their studies.

## **4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

The ethos of the school reflects a clear sense of shared values. There is a warm and welcoming environment in which pupils can develop their potential.

Pupils' spiritual development is good. It is developed through work in religious education and in collective worship. A number of NC subjects such as English, music, science and art also contribute by providing opportunities for pupils to gain understanding of other people's cultures and beliefs and by developing a sense of curiosity about life's meaning and purpose. Worship in the hall and studio is well organised, is broadly of a Christian character, and includes appropriate presentations by staff and sometimes outside speakers. The themes are effectively related to the life and work of the school and contemporary moral issues. On the days when pupils remain in their registration classes there is a 'thought for the day'. Appropriate guidelines are provided and the best worship is characterised by the positive contribution of the teacher and meaningful contribution of the pupils; others are brief and provide little time for pupils to reflect.

Pupils' moral development is good. One of the strengths of the school is its commitment to the social inclusion of pupils of all abilities and diverse backgrounds. The vast majority of pupils respond well and treat their teachers, their environment and each other with respect. They develop a sense of right and wrong and respond positively to the trust shown in them by the school. Moral issues are raised regularly during acts of collective worship, in subjects of the NC and in PSHE and RE. Racism and other forms of prejudice are discussed and challenged in PSHE, RE and English. Pupils with SEN are very well integrated into school life. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds display their concern and sense of responsibility for others through their support for a wide variety of charities, local, national and international. A number of individual pupils have recently gained the Impetus Award, a national award in citizenship.

Pupils' social development is very good. It is developed through a very good number of activities in the school, and in the local community. Pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities within music, games and outdoor activities. The number of pupils gaining success in the Duke of Edinburgh Award is very high. Pupils from different cultures are very well integrated. The school council provides very good opportunities for pupils of all years to take responsibility and contribute to the ethos and social life of the school. Sixth form students respond well to many opportunities to exercise responsibility. For example,

they provide their younger counterparts with good support through their peer counsellors' group, they listen to pupils read and offer support for individual pupils in class. Pupils of all ages are involved in a wide range of local and national competitions which widen their horizons and develop self-confidence. The recently established house system is effective in involving large numbers of pupils in preparing, organising and presenting activities.

Pupils' cultural development is good. A good range of extra-curricular activities extends pupils' cultural knowledge and understanding. These include visits to theatres, art galleries, museums and concerts both locally and further afield. Pupils' European and international awareness is developed through specific aspects of the curriculum, such as geography, art and history as well as through links with France and Germany. Multi-cultural education is reflected in aspects of work in many of the subjects such as English, art, history, MFL, DT and RE. Awareness of Wales and its culture has been developed well since the last inspection in most subjects. There is a successful school Eisteddfod, St David's Day is celebrated, pupils take part in Urdd activities and many displays and signs reflect the culture of Wales.

The positive ethos of the school is reflected in the attractive displays around the school which celebrate pupils' participation in school and life in the community.

## **4.2 Behaviour and attitudes**

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards learning are good and this has a positive effect on the ethos and quality of life in school. Policies, procedures and expectations of pupils are clearly stated and well understood. Members of staff are conscientious and consistent in establishing good standards of behaviour and most pupils respond positively to them; as a result, relationships throughout the school are good and a pleasant and friendly learning atmosphere prevails throughout.

Social behaviour throughout the school is civilised and orderly. It is very good throughout the site at the beginning and end of the school day, during breaks and lunchtime. The vast majority of pupils are well behaved in lessons. A small minority of pupils demonstrate an unacceptable attitude towards learning in some classes and are reluctant to apply themselves to their tasks; when this occurs, staff usually respond effectively.

Strategies and procedures for behaviour management are well-established and the senior management team, heads of year and form tutors monitor standards of behaviour effectively. Pupils are confident that the school reacts positively when they seek support with any difficulties and that allegations of bullying are dealt with promptly; procedures for dealing with bullying are well understood and are implemented very efficiently and effectively.

Social inclusion measures, including additional support for those pupils considered to be at risk are carefully managed and monitored. The referral room, whereby pupils may be isolated for a period of time under staff supervision, is sensitively organised and used objectively. Every effort is made to resolve problems and assist pupils facing difficulties and good use is made of external support in this process. Exclusions are low and have reduced considerably over the past three years; 21 pupils were excluded temporarily and one pupil permanently during the previous twelve months.

The school has made considerable progress in relation to overall behaviour management since the last inspection and the results are to be seen in the quality of life in school. It is a lively but orderly and civilised community where routines and procedures are well established.

### **4.3 Attendance**

The average rate of attendance, 92.25%, for the three terms prior to the inspection was satisfactory.

It has been a school priority to raise attendance first of all to 90% and subsequently to 92%; now that this target has been achieved, the school aims to improve attendance further with a 95% target. Good attendance is clearly an expectation of pupils and form tutors, heads of year, leadership and school administrative staff in particular, are all conscientious in following school policy and procedures. Communication is very good at all levels. Patterns of attendance are monitored and followed up effectively and promptly and valuable assistance is provided when required by the educational social workers (ESWs) who are based in the school.

The school makes very good use of the fully computerised registration system in monitoring all attendance matters closely; a first day call system is firmly established and lesson by lesson class registers are maintained; such strategies work effectively in supporting the school's efforts in eliminating unauthorised absence and truancy. As a result, the unauthorised absence rate is very low and the practice under control. A significant number of pupils arrive late for registration but the practice is known to staff and targeted for improvement by the school. There is a significant rate of holidays and occasional days taken in term time by some pupils but the practice is strongly discouraged by the school in information to parents. Registers are maintained fully in accordance with statutory requirements and the school day operates efficiently, punctually and without fuss.

Registration arrangements and pastoral support are a strength of the school, with many successful initiatives in responding to social inclusion measures as required by National Assembly Memo 3/99.

There has been consolidated improvement since the last inspection with many features of very good practice.

## **5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

### **5.1 Teaching**

The quality of teaching has improved overall since the previous inspection and has become a major strength of the school. It contributes significantly to pupils' achievements. It is at least satisfactory in 98% of classes and good or better in 77%. These figures exceed the targets set by the National Assembly for the year 2002, for there to be satisfactory or better teaching in 95% of classes and good or better in 50%. In 10% of classes there is teaching of very good quality and this occurs in all key stages. In KS3 70% of teaching is good or better. In KS4 the figure is 76%. In the sixth form 95% is good or better.

A high proportion of the good or very good teaching takes place in almost every subject across the whole school. The consistency of the good and very good teaching is a strength and displays many features of good practice.

The quality of teaching is good in all subjects in each key stage and in the sixth form.

Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is good. Departmental planning is good. National Curriculum programmes of study and the requirements of external examinations are properly covered in schemes of work. Strategies to use and develop key skills are identified.

Classroom organisation is good. Lessons are well planned, have clear objectives which, in most cases, are shared with pupils. Classes are usually well managed, practical work is well organised and teachers give generously of their time in providing support. In a small minority of lessons, pupils' undeveloped listening skills slow the pace of the lessons and time is wasted.

The range of teaching techniques used in lessons is mainly good, but many classrooms are small for the large numbers in some classes and this often restricts the range of strategies and flexible groupings which can be adopted. Good sequences of activities and resources maintain interest, develop understanding and self-confidence in general. Skilful questioning ascertains pupils' knowledge and understanding and often drives learning. On many occasions, pupils develop their understanding through discussion, but on occasion they are not sufficiently encouraged to overcome difficulties for themselves, together, or to use their initiative. There is often a final recapitulation by the teacher of key ideas which reinforce what has been learnt, although opportunities for pupils to lead this exercise are under-used.

The match of activities to pupils' previous achievements and needs is good. Teachers consistently use the information gained from day-to-day assessment to plan future work. Setting pupils into teaching groups by ability provides additional opportunities for this. Learning targets provide a sharp focus. Teachers know pupils well. Regular feedback, often informal, motivates and supports. Expectations are high overall. Activities are well adapted to provide pupils with different abilities with challenging activities. There are, however, instances in a minority of subjects in some middle ability classes, when work is insufficiently matched to pupils' understanding and does not stretch them.

A number of features characterise the lessons which are merely satisfactory; teachers have lower expectations and give fewer opportunities for pupils to learn independently; the same approach is used throughout the lesson or the exposition is too long; work is not so carefully matched to pupils' needs; the lesson concentrates on the ground to be covered and fails to allow sufficient scope for pupils' contributions.

In virtually all classrooms, very good relationships motivate pupils. The best teaching is enthusiastic about the work being covered and praise is used well to encourage and acknowledge achievement.

## **5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting**

Assessment, recording and reporting have improved and are now good.

The school policy for assessment, recording and reporting is well documented. Assessment appropriately aims to further the progress of pupils. There are clear, detailed guidelines for integrating assessment into schemes of work. Implementation of assessment policy is successfully delegated to individual departments.

Pupils' work, including homework, is generally well marked. In all departments, constructive and accurate marking includes helpful written comments, indicating pupils' subject strengths and weaknesses, together with indications as to how further progress can be made. Good use is made of oral feedback, including the appropriate use of praise and encouragement. Pupils have opportunities to reflect on their progress and to set targets for improvement. In the best practice, they are given and are able to use clear objectives well linked to NC and public examination criteria.

Teachers generally keep appropriate records of pupils' progress. Departmental records are generally complete and accurate. Half-termly reviews enable the school to monitor pupils' overall progress effectively. These are clearly and accurately related to NC levels or GCSE grades and the criteria for success are well known to pupils. Good central records are kept. There are good procedures for identifying and monitoring underachievement. A successful mentoring system in Y11 for pupils requiring extra support involves senior staff. Assessment requirements for the National Curriculum, public examinations and vocational courses are all met. Pupils with SEN have individual educational plans (IEPs) in line with the Code of Practice and teachers are aware of pupils' special needs. Statements are reviewed annually with parental involvement.

National Records of Achievement (NRoA) documents are produced for all pupils at the end of KS4 and are updated for students in the sixth form. The well produced documents contain appropriate and carefully written sections on pupils' work experience, career action plans, achievements and personal achievements. Academic, cultural and extra-curricular activities are well represented by certificates and subject summaries. Pupils give much time, thought and care to their personal statements. The process of building a record of pupils' academic, social and personal progress takes place throughout Y10 and Y11, continuing into the sixth form and is well linked with the pastoral and assessment systems. Current KS3 pupils are successfully building up Progress Files from Y7 onwards.

Parents receive one full report each year plus an interim report. The reports give constructive and positive statements on pupils' achievements, progress and study skills. Comments are usually subject specific and clearly indicate pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Parents have an opportunity to respond to reports and there is an appropriate programme of consultative meetings. NC and external examination achievements are appropriately reported. Overall, the reporting system has improved since the last inspection and is now good.

Good use is made of NC assessments, external examination results and other assessment data to identify those pupils needing extra support on entering Y7 and in setting as pupils move through the school. Heads of department, in conjunction with form tutors, make good use of whole school attainment records to identify relative underachievement and to monitor progress. An annual review and analysis of examination results is well used to evaluate

attainment in departments and to set realistic future targets both for individual pupils and subject areas. Increasing and effective use is being made of value added data.

### **5.3 Curriculum**

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the statutory requirements for the NC and religious education in KS3 and KS4. Provision is appropriate to pupils' needs, interests and abilities. It successfully promotes their spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development and prepares them well for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life in an increasingly diverse and complex society. There are good arrangements for social inclusion, including day release to a local college for a small number of KS4 pupils. Pupils with SEN are well integrated into mainstream classes. Eleven pupils with SEN have an appropriately modified curriculum and a further 11 have been correctly disapplied from a subject of the national curriculum. Pupils with literacy problems are withdrawn from lessons for extra specialist support and are given valuable additional help by sixth form students and parent volunteers. Additional support and opportunities are given to extend the most able pupils.

In KS3, pupils are taught in an appropriate mix of mixed ability and setted groups. Generally, sufficient time is allocated to each subject. All pupils have access to an IT course and PSHE. In Y8 and 9, able pupils have the opportunity to study a second foreign language. There is a high number of large classes. Teachers work hard to overcome the potential problems but the large numbers restrict the range of classroom activities. There are useful curriculum links with primary schools across many areas of the curriculum. The two week long mathematics summer school makes a very good contribution to pupils' progress and self-confidence. All new pupils make a two-day visit to the school which helps the transition process.

There is a good range of provision at KS4. All NC subjects continue to be available, and a number of new subjects are added as GCSE options. In addition, vocational GNVQ courses in ICT and applied science have been successfully introduced. Take up of most subjects is at least satisfactory. In addition to the statutory core subjects, all pupils continue to have lessons in IT and RE leading to GCSE (short course) qualifications. A good range of options ensures considerable flexibility and choice. There is good provision for a small number of pupils to follow vocational courses at a local college. These modifications to the mainstream curriculum have helped to improve motivation and attendance. Over 40% of pupils stay on in the sixth form and a similar proportion continue with FE.

A wide and appropriate range of AS, A level and vocational courses is available. Good co-operative arrangements with a local college and schools effectively extend the options available to students. Very good provision is made for key skills, with very well organised and delivered accredited courses. Provision is also made for general studies, PSHE, RE and further education and careers guidance. Overall curriculum provision in the sixth form is very good.

Planning for the key skills of literacy and numeracy is good; planning for ICT across the curriculum has been adversely affected by staffing difficulties. There is a clear focus on further improving key skills in the school development plan (SDP). Whole school INSET on key skills has had a beneficial effect across the curriculum. Planning for the Cwricwlwm

Cymreig is satisfactory overall and is good in a number of departments especially English, geography and RE.

Planning for the delivery of the NC and examination syllabuses is good in most subject schemes of work. Homework is usually set regularly and builds upon and extends the work done in class.

There is a very well planned rolling programme of PSHE which meets the needs of each pupil, as identified in ACCAC guidelines. Sex education, citizenship, health education, including education about drug misuse and careers education and guidance are all appropriately included. Good use is made of the Careers Company. Work experience is well organised for all pupils in Y10 and Y12.

Extra-curricular provision is very good. There is an extensive range of sporting, musical activities, regular subject and other clubs available to pupils in the lunch hour and after school. The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme is very strong in the school with over 70 awards in the last school year. Many teachers give valuable voluntary additional support to pupils preparing for examinations in the lunch hour, after school and during holidays.

#### **5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

The quality of support and guidance is good and is one of the strengths of the school. The school's pastoral system clearly demonstrates concern for the pupils' welfare and for the establishment of a secure environment where hard work and mutual support are valued. Academic and personal progress are monitored well and pupils are helped to achieve their full potential.

The pastoral organisation consists of an assistant head teacher, heads of year and their assistants, who effectively manage teams of form tutors. Communications between members of the pastoral team are good.

The comprehensive programme of liaison between the school and the primary partner schools provides in-depth information about academic levels of pupils and pupils with problems. This relationship is friendly and productive.

Y7 pupils are placed into mixed ability tutor groups forming the basis of the house system, in which pupils compete in a variety of activities. Where possible, form tutors remain with the same group of pupils throughout their school life, allowing for sustained relationships to be built up. Form tutors meet their forms each morning and afternoon for registration and on three days with no assembly, check attendance, monitor uniform and the use of homework diaries, oversee work related to the school's PSHE programme and carry out day-to-day administration. Form teachers and heads of year monitor pupils' progress well throughout the year and follow up any concerns. In most forms during registration, weekly themes for 'thought for the day' are discussed and a prayer is read. At other times, pupils pursue their own choice of work so that time is used profitably. However, this is not always the case, and there are instances of time being unprofitably spent in conversation. Pupils' homework diaries form a valuable means of helping pupils to organise themselves and are a regular link between home and school.

Progress files are being introduced into KS3, but at KS4 pupils contribute so that their NRoA can be produced at the end of Y11. They work well with form tutors to compile an accurate record of their personal achievement and activities in the wider community as well as their academic record. KS3 pupils' record book acknowledges service to others, representing the school and house, contribution to school life, interests and skills, residential visits, out of school activities, attendance and punctuality, and merit awards for good work and behaviour. All these contribute to the 'Ysgol Bryn Elia Challenge', where pupils receive bronze, silver, gold and platinum awards for their achievements. In addition, each year group has an annual celebratory assembly where the awards are presented to individuals. Pupils value these arrangements.

There is an established school council of elected form representatives which has helped to provide improvements and insights.

Pupils in need of support are identified on entry to the school and attend a 'Positive Images Positive Steps' course for a limited period. KS4 pupils needing alternative education attend the 'Go For It' course run by Careers Wales. Good peer support is given by students in years 11, 12 and 13 to younger pupils, who request it. Y11 pupils apply to become part of this 'Buddy System' and, once accepted, receive training from an LEA worker and an ESW. There are sound school policies for behaviour, attendance, bullying, and substance abuse. Pupils who cannot conform to acceptable standards of behaviour and work are accommodated in the referral room, which is supervised by senior staff. These arrangements combine to make very effective backup.

The very good, comprehensive PSHE programme is taught through a weekly lesson on a rolling programme across the time-table. In collaboration with an assistant head teacher, each head of year is responsible for the programme, which is regularly reviewed. Form tutors deliver most of the programme, with support from those responsible and external speakers when appropriate. Newly appointed teachers receive help and advice. On occasions, as INSET, they will observe a lesson taken by a more experienced teacher. At an appropriate time each year, guidance on study skills is provided. Useful school produced booklets, support pupils and parents as they choose their options for KS4 and for the sixth form. Teachers give freely of their own time providing good support for pupils during lunch time and after school.

The programme for careers education and guidance is good. A teacher is responsible for both organisation and arrangements. Pupils make good progress in understanding career opportunities and in reviewing achievements and action planning. At present, the provision is delivered as part of the PSHE programme from Y9. Activities are well integrated into the work experience programme. Support is provided by the careers service, whose advisors undertake individual interviews in KS4 and attend parents' evenings. Information in careers supplements the guidance programme.

Links with external agencies and services are good. The NHS Trust financed nurse, for 2 hours a week, has an administrative role only. Pupils looked after by the local authority have appropriate care plans. First-aiders from the teaching and non-teaching staff have up-to-date qualifications and are located at well distributed points across of the school.

The school's procedures for child protection fully meet statutory requirements. Procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety are good.

## **5.5 Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)**

The provision for pupils with SEN is good and the school's response to the New Code of Practice is very good.

Several appropriate strategies are used to meet SEN needs. KS3 pupils with basic skills difficulty are withdrawn for specific help. A number of pupils with specific learning difficulty are disapplied from a subject of the NC to receive specialist teaching. Literacy support is provided by sixth form students and parents through the school's paired reading scheme. In-class support is provided mainly by learning support assistants (LSAs) and sixth form students.

The 131 pupils withdrawn from mainstream lessons to receive additional assistance in basic skills are making good progress. They follow good IEPs that include a mix of commercial and teacher-prepared materials supplemented by appropriate ICT programmes. Sixth form students provide very good support when the pupils return to their mainstream classes. Thirty six pupils derive benefit from regular reading practice sessions through the paired reading scheme. The Supportive Studies Room is very well organised and provides a good teaching resource for pupils with SEN.

The 11 pupils who are extracted mainly from modern foreign languages to receive literacy and study skills support, achieve well. They develop a secure grasp of basic syntax, together with grammar and spelling skills that enhance their writing. Good progress is made in gaining the relevant study skills. Good cross-curricular support is provided to ensure progress in all NC subjects.

Subject teachers are responsible for providing suitable work for pupils with SEN within their curriculum area. Very good links are established between a named teacher in the subject department and SENCo. Useful meetings are held every half-term to discuss pupils' progress and to share relevant information. In addition the SENCo provides every teacher in school with pupils' IEPs and any additional relevant information. LSAs offer good support to small groups and individual pupils. They work closely with the subject teachers, record pupils' progress in the lesson and share the information with the SENCo. This is a valuable procedure that develops the expertise of the LSAs, and identifies areas for future development. Since the last inspection, where support for non-statemented pupils has been provided it has made a good impact on pupils' progress. However, there are still classes where extra support is required.

Provision in the special needs unit is very good and pupils make good progress. Many are successful at the end of KS4 in gaining GCSE grades. Modification to the NC, together with the differentiation of activities, are routinely made to promote challenge through the provision of appropriate individual learning opportunities. Very good integration opportunities are provided for all the pupils across the subjects of the curriculum and school activities. The LSA provide the pupils with good support to ensure that integration is successful.

Sixty two pupils have a statement of SEN. Statements are reviewed effectively and there is very good consultation with parents, external agencies and the LEA, according to need. One hundred and twenty eight pupils have been placed on the school's SEN register, which is a useful working document and is reviewed regularly. Every pupil on the register has a good

IEP. Targets are specific and relate well to pupils' identified needs and are shared with the pupil and parents, in line with good practice. IEP reviews are regular and effective.

The SENCo provides very good leadership. Code of Practice requirements are very well met, the work is well organised and together with the specialist teachers they provide the school with a valuable SEN resource. The designated SEN governor, and senior staff offer very good support and have been successful in creating an ethos where all pupils can integrate into mainstream in accordance with their educational and social ability. This inclusion is very good and is a strength of the school.

## **5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions**

Partnerships with parents and community are good; partnerships with other schools and institutions are very good and have improved since the previous inspection. The range of links and partnerships makes a very valuable contribution to the life of the school, its values and ethos and pupils' social and academic development.

Parents receive a regular flow of information and newsletters and are kept well informed of events and activities; additional booklets are much appreciated by pupils and parents. The prospectus is issued to parents of all new pupils and together with the governors' annual report to parents, complies with National Assembly requirements. A new prospectus is in the process of completion and a home/school agreement is established.

Parents' open evenings are held annually for each year group and an additional evening is organised for Y7 pupils; there is good attendance on these evenings. The school operates an open-door policy whereby parents can make arrangements by mutual agreement to visit the school at any time of day to discuss concerns or progress. The PTA provides valuable support and parents readily give support when approached for assistance with fund-raising activities or social events.

There is a range of effective links with the community which enhance pupils' experiences. The school is outward looking and aware of a responsibility both to its local community and the wider community. It annually supports a number of worthy local organisations and charities.

Arrangements for the transfer of pupils from the contributory primary schools commence early in Y6. They are very well organised, extensive and continue throughout the year prior to transfer. There is a commitment to ensuring the transition from primary schools is as smooth as possible. Y7 pupils appreciate the support they receive and are aware of the pastoral care system should they have any concerns. Curricular links have been strengthened.

There are extensive curricular and sporting links with other secondary schools and a college of further education; very effective use is made of these links in strengthening overall curricular provision in support of pupils' needs. Formal partnership has now been established with a teacher training institution and trainee teachers are well supported at the school.

## **5.7 Partnership with industry**

The school's partnership with industry is good.

The new policy on Work Related Education (WRE), strategies and guidance on procedures give clear guidance and direction and much of the ACCAC framework for work-related education for 14-19 year olds in Wales is being followed. A comprehensive programme of activities is carefully planned, monitored, evaluated and delivered through work experience, careers educational guidance, additional activities and PHSE.

Currently, the programme to raise pupils' awareness of industry begins in Y9 but it is intended to commence from Y7. There are planned activities for year groups from Y9. Pupils in Y9 follow a PSHE module; Y10 pupils undertake a week's work experience in the summer term and the range of placements is comprehensive and interesting. Pupils are well prepared and during the placements are monitored by a team of teachers. Employers, pupils and teachers are fully involved in evaluating the experiences and the programme is well managed by the careers co-ordinator. Y10 pupils also undertake a programme of mock interviews; local employers are very supportive and pupils prepare thoroughly for the project. Y12 pupils undertake a week's work experience at the end of the summer term and both Y10 and Y12 pupils are involved directly in arrangements for their own work experience programmes. Pupils are involved in a range of other activities and experiences.

Although, as yet, there is no overall co-ordinator for partnership with industry generally, the school has made considerable progress in attracting much sponsorship and general support from the world of business, commerce and industry in an area with limited large scale opportunities. At present, there are no short-term staff secondments to industry and placements are used insufficiently in the staff development programme.

Valuable and effective partnerships have been established with employers, support agencies, Careers Wales and ELWa and a number of sponsors, which make an important contribution to the curriculum and pupils' experiences.

## **6. MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement**

The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is very good. There is a clear focus on raising standards and continuous improvement. The culture is formally embedded at various levels in the school's structure and in informal groupings.

Procedures to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's progress and activity are firmly in place. Weekly timetabled meetings between each head of department and a deputy headteacher line manager ensure high profile monitoring, discussion and follow-up review. Whole-school monitoring is successful and leadership has very good understanding of the school's development. Senior staff have been trained in observing the quality of teaching and learning, in providing feedback, and where necessary, setting improvement targets.

The SDP provides an important focus. The detail of the document addresses a wide range of aspects pertinent to the direction of the school. Roles and responsibility are clear and understood. Departmental development plans pay due attention to cross-curricular issues, and their application of published school policies. Priorities, targets and success criteria are outlined.

Whole-school performance indicators and targets for improvement are set using available information. The school is increasingly data rich. There is a good knowledge of the use of data to compare performance. Teachers are trained to use the range of information to judge the progress of pupils from their entry to the school and the relative value-added by subjects. A system is now in place to identify underachievement early. Mentoring is increasingly effective.

The school reviews aspects of its performance against national benchmarks and externally validated standards such as awards of Investor in People and Chartermark. It has twice won the Schools Curriculum Award and the Welsh Secondary Schools Award.

Review of the significant number of important developments has properly taken place together with plans to tackle remaining issues.

## **6.2 Leadership and efficiency**

A sense of shared purpose and commitment has successfully been developed, in line with the school's sound statement of mission and declared aims, which it fulfils well. There is a very good understanding of whole school issues and a focus on raising achievement and developing a responsible community. The school is successful in achieving its objectives.

The governing body is well informed and contains a wide range of expertise for the school's benefit. Governors have been fully committed to the improved successes of the school and are fully involved in decisions and planning procedures. They have overseen the change from Grant Maintained to Foundation status. They monitor and review the progress of developments and targets conscientiously.

The school is very well organised overall. The senior team includes the headteacher, two deputy and three assistant headteachers. The headteacher has provided very effective, steady, sustained leadership since his initial appointment at the time of the previous inspection and has overseen the school's rapid change, progress, improved ethos and popularity. He is well supported by the senior team who have a clear sense of direction and understanding of effecting continuous improvement. Each member has specific as well as corporate responsibilities and line management links. The responsibilities of the senior staff have been carefully structured to reflect the school's priorities. Subject and pastoral responsibilities are well distributed and implemented. Staff work well together to support and monitor pupils. The quality of management of the leadership group and of those with whole school responsibilities is good. Departments are well led.

Communication throughout the school is very good. The routine organisation of the school is very good. Teaching and non-teaching staff at all levels in the school work well together, which is reflected in the successful outcome of the school's Investor in People submission.

The school successfully and efficiently manages its caretaking, grounds maintenance and catering, in-house.

The financial management of the school is very good. Planning is closely related to the priorities of the school development plan. Governors are closely involved in financial decisions.

Very effective use is made of available additional funding. Dual audit reports are regular and positive. Day-to-day financial management is very good, and spending is kept under constant review. Information is readily available to budget holders. The efficiency and effectiveness with which resources are managed are very good. Statutory requirements are met.

The school gives good value for money.

### **6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

#### **Staffing**

There are 52 full time and one part time teachers at the school, giving a full time equivalent (FTE) of 52.56. The pupil:teacher ratio is 17.99 : 1, which is high in relation to similar schools. Teachers' qualifications and experience match the requirements of the school, the NC and the wider KS4 and sixth form curriculum. The deployment of staff is appropriate to their specialist subjects. In RE and art, and where some classes are taught by non-specialists, standards are not adversely affected. Many teachers give freely of their time and energies in out of lesson activities to support and encourage pupils to make better progress and to develop their personal and social skills.

Non-teaching staff, including office and clerical staff, technicians for science, ICT and the workshops provide effective support to the life of the school. However, technician support in science and DT is low and was highlighted in the last inspection.

The LEA financed SEN unit is well staffed and support for pupils from this unit when they join mainstream classes is good. There is also mainly adequate support staff for other SEN pupils and they provide an efficient service.

Staff development is well organised. The provision fully involves teaching and non-teaching staff. INSET needs are identified in whole school and departmental plans and in regular professional development meetings with heads of department. Training is carefully allocated to meet whole school priorities and the needs identified by individuals and departments. The coordinator has successfully applied for extra funds for INSET from the National Teaching Council to be used in the promotion of key skills.

Teachers new to teaching and new to the school are well supported by departments and members of senior management and there is a good induction programme. Support for supply teachers is very effective. They are provided with clear information when they arrive in the school. Teacher movement has been reduced, but averages 10 per cent.

## **Accommodation**

The school occupies an attractive, well maintained, tiered hillside site. Accommodation is mostly in good condition and is used well for teaching and learning. It is only just sufficient to meet the curricular and pastoral needs of the increased numbers of pupils on roll and provides a safe environment. A number of effective improvements, refurbishment and a rolling programme of decoration have taken place since the last inspection. The provision of railings has markedly reduced the amount of mud carried into the school on shoes. An attractive new library and learning centre is proving highly successful.

The small size of a number of rooms in relation to the large numbers in some classes, often restricts the range of teaching strategies and classroom organisation which can be employed. Several south facing rooms quickly become unpleasantly warm when the outside temperature rises. Food and textile rooms in design and technology are now outdated and require upgrading, as acknowledged in the school development plan.

The school is free from graffiti and litter. Decoration and displays, which celebrate the ethos and achievements of the school and pupils, are overall good.

Pupils are considerate in their movement in the congested corridors and staircases, some of which are narrow for the numbers who now use them.

## **Resources**

The quantity and quality of resources across the school are good. In most subjects, the resources of text books available are good, but there is a shortage in aspects of art and in books for home use in history. IT resources are good with recently updated and extended facilities. The pupil:computer ratio of 4.5:1 is good. Rooms are well equipped and linked to the network. When not used for discrete IT lessons, they are booked and used by other subject areas across the curriculum. The rooms for the sixth form have been equipped with computers, and are used extensively by the students.

The recent learning resource centre includes the library and a computer area, which is popular and extensively used by students and pupils. The library is well stocked with an appropriately varied range of fiction and supply of appropriate reference books for most subject areas across the curriculum. The ratio of books to pupils almost matches the recommended 13:1. Borrowing rates, about 2000 a year, are good. The English and mathematics departments' use of computers in their lessons enhances the range of teaching methods. The librarian manages the centre efficiently and effectively.

# **7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING**

## **Standards achieved by pupils**

### **English**

Standards in English are good in KS3 and 4 and usually very good in the sixth form. In the end of KS3 NC tests in 2002, achievement was above the Welsh average, with 65% gaining

level 5 or above. At GCSE 60% of pupils were awarded grade A\*-C, which is around local levels and above national figures. All the cohort was entered and all but one gained grades A\*-G. In English literature, all pupils entered were awarded grades A\*-C, with a high proportion of A\*/A grades. These figures are all well above local and national averages, although from a relatively small entry, as the school entered about 45% of the year for literature. In line with the national picture, girls performed better than boys in the tests and examinations. A level results were very good. All candidates were awarded grade A-E, with 60% at the higher grades A-C.

## **Good features**

### ***KS3 & KS4***

- Pupils develop good oral skills at both key stages. They are confident, articulate and responsive and give detailed explanations.
- Many pupils are keen readers. Reading skills are well developed.
- Pupils are strongly engaged in self-assessment.
- They draft, edit and revise their work well, often using ICT.
- Most work is well organised. Presentation is good.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of character and motivation.
- When given the opportunity, they work productively in small groups and pairs. They pose and answer questions willingly on social and moral issues.
- Standard English is used well. Pupils recognise the need and are increasingly able, to adapt their style for different purposes. Many sustain extended writing increasingly successfully.
- They benefit from visits and a variety of valuable extra-curricular opportunities.
- There is great sensitivity to poetry. Many booklets of pupils' own poetry have been published.
- Research skills develop well. Pupils use reference books, other texts and ICT sources effectively.
- Very good use is made of ICT in word-processing. Unusually sophisticated use is made of graphs and images to plot their work.
- SEN pupils are well supported and make good progress.
- The subject's contribution to PSHE, community and environmental issues is good
- Coursework is well done. Pupils build up extensive personal files.
- Almost all pupils respond well to teachers' expectations.

### ***Sixth form***

- Written work is very conscientiously completed, often to a high standard. Responses to texts studied are thoughtful and perceptive.
- Students are able to execute a good variety of writing, their extended essay answers are well supported by knowledge and understanding of background material. They can make their own extensive notes. They can write imaginatively and perceptively, producing their own poems and prose pieces following different models.
- In lessons, students are very attentive, listening carefully, taking notes, participating confidently in the reading out of texts and contributing usefully to class discussion.

## **Shortcomings**

### ***KS3 & KS4***

- Pupils do not always take sufficient responsibility for their own learning and problem-solving.
- English literature GCSE results are very good, with 100% success grades A\*-C, but the school enters only a relatively low proportion of pupils for literature.
- A small minority of pupils have poor listening skills.

### ***Sixth form***

- Some students are rather reticent in open discussion and need encouragement to contribute.
- Students take some time to acquire competency in and familiarity with the technical vocabulary of linguistic analysis and are less able to use it in oral work than they are in written answers.

Good progress has been made throughout the school since the previous inspection. All aspects of the National Curriculum are covered.

## **Mathematics**

Standards of achievement are good in KS3, KS4 and in the sixth form. In the end of KS3 tests in 2002, 69% of pupils gained at least level 5. There was very little difference between the boys and the girls. Results were above both the LEA and national averages.

In 2002, almost the whole cohort was entered for GCSE, and 49% achieved A\*-C grades without any difference between the achievement of the boys and girls. Results were an improvement on 2001, were slightly below the LEA average and equal to the national average. Grades A\*-G were achieved by 98%.

A level entries were low in 2001 and 2002. In 2001, all four entries gained A-E grades, three at A-C. In 2002, all three entries gained A-C grades. The single entry for further mathematics achieved a grade C.

## **Good features**

### ***KS3 & KS4***

- Pupils in KS3 and KS4 respond well in the question/answer sessions at the start of each lesson. Their answers are clear and usually accurate.
- They can collect and represent data from sampling and surveys with a variety of types of graphs.
- Pupils use time, 12 hour and 24 hour clocks confidently. They can read time-tables accurately and do any related calculations.
- Pupils' knowledge of percentages in everyday situations is good. They are confident in dealing with any associated calculations.
- In KS3 and KS4, pupils with SEN make good progress, especially with support staff assistance.

- In KS3 and KS4, pupils can attend extra-curricular clubs, surgeries and investigational work to enter competitions and challenges. This provides useful opportunities to challenge the more able pupils, to improve the achievement of others and has a positive effect on standards.
- KS4 pupils understand the interpretation of the equations of straight lines, can draw lines from their equations and can use them to solve problems.
- They recall their knowledge of the area of regular shapes and apply it for use in the calculations of volumes. They can apply Pythagoras' theorem to problems involving area and volume.
- They can use the necessary statistical calculations to cope with problems involving industrial sampling.
- When answering questions, most pupils in both key stages can explain their reasoning readily and fluently.
- Most pupils can interpret problems and can choose appropriate techniques in their solution.

### ***Sixth form***

- Year 13 students understand a range of concepts in pure mathematics and statistics and adapt their knowledge to solve associated problems.
- They are starting to have a good understanding of partial fractions in algebra and correlation coefficients for statistical investigation work. They calculate correlation coefficients using spreadsheet software on the computers.
- Year 12 students are making good progress in pure mathematics and are able to work with polynomials and the remainder theorem, and work with vectors.

### **Shortcomings**

- Pupils do not use the full range of ICT software, eg, for graphical work.
- Calculators are mostly used to advantage in the school but pupils are not encouraged to estimate their answers to check the feasibility of the calculator answer. A minority of pupils rely wholly on the use of a calculator and do not attempt to carry out even simple mental calculations themselves.
- A significant minority of less able pupils do not always finish all their work.
- More able pupils are not always given sufficient further work to extend them fully.
- Small numbers opt to take A level mathematics.

Since the last inspection, standards of achievement have improved from satisfactory to good.

### **Science**

Standards of achievement are good in KS3, KS4 and the sixth form.

In 2002, the percentage of pupils achieving level 5 or above in the KS3 SATs was well above the national average.

The standards reached in GCSE science examinations were just above the national average. All pupils entered for a GCSE science examination, virtually all obtained an A\*-G grade and almost 55% achieved the higher A\*-C grades.

At A level, almost all students achieved an A-E grade and over 60% reach the higher A-C grades; standards are broadly in line with the national averages.

Pupils with SEN have full access to the national curriculum and to accredited courses in KS4.

### **Good features**

#### ***KS3***

- The majority of pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of a wide range of topics covering all aspects of the NC.
- Pupils have a good recall of previous work, they can explain and discuss key ideas and are able to apply their knowledge and understanding to problem solving.
- They make good progress through the key stage. Able pupils make very good progress. Pupils with SEN make good progress in relation to their abilities.
- Experimental and investigative skills are acquired and developed throughout the KS. Pupils are able to follow instructions and carry out experiments. They make accurate observations and measurements using appropriate units, can describe and record their results and the majority make good use of graphical methods in their analyses.
- Practical work is carried out safely.
- Many pupils make good oral contributions in class.
- The quality and presentation of written work is often good or very good.
- The majority of pupils make good use of mathematical skills in scientific contexts.
- Scientific vocabulary is carefully introduced by teachers and is appropriately used by most pupils in written and oral work.

#### ***KS4***

- Most pupils build upon their KS3 successes and have a good recall and understanding of topics covering life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.
- The most able can use their knowledge and understanding to solve scientific problems and make very good progress.
- Overall, most pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress from KS3 to KS4. Pupils with SEN are making a good start to the new vocational applied science course.
- The overall quality of written work is good. Good use is made of the well-produced worksheets.
- Pupils' experimental and investigative skills are further developed. The majority of pupils can plan and successfully carry out an investigation. They are well aware of the need to control variables and to make fair comparisons. They can make a range of appropriate observations and take accurate measurements.
- Data are well used in detailed analysis and in making valid conclusions. More able pupils are able to link their conclusions to scientific theory and the predictions made. They are able to make reasoned suggestions for improving their methods.
- Good standards are reached in externally assessed practical work by a minority of pupils.
- Throughout both key stages pupils are made increasingly aware of the valuable contributions science makes to everyday life. They acquire knowledge and understanding of the social, economic and environmental aspects of the subject.
- Pupils are able to use ICT to collect, process, store and present data. They are able to research using electronic sources of information.

### ***Sixth form***

- Students have a good knowledge and understanding of a wide range of topics and key concepts in biology, chemistry and physics.
- Their knowledge, understanding and skills are well used in solving problems.
- Communication and mathematical skills are well used. Students research and organise information effectively, building up clear, comprehensive, well-kept files.
- Practical skills are good. Experiments are well planned, students work safely and systematically, they make appropriate observations and collect accurate data. Results are well analysed and interpreted using appropriate scientific theory.
- Most students make good progress during the courses.

### **Shortcomings**

#### ***KS3 & KS4***

- A small minority of middle and lower ability pupils lack knowledge and understanding in key areas. They make slower progress, which in a few cases is hindered by inappropriate behaviour and attitudes in class.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to develop “hands on” ICT skills in scientific contexts.
- In a significant proportion of assessed practical work, pupils are insufficiently challenged by the tasks, and underachieve.
- In assessed practical work, pupils’ planning often shows lack of scientific detail and their evaluations lack sufficient depth.

Since the last inspection standards of achievement have improved.

### **Welsh second language**

Standards of achievement in listening, speaking, reading and writing are good in KS3 and satisfactory in KS4 and the sixth form. In KS4 the vast majority of the pupils enter the full course GCSE examination. Although the A\*-C grades are about 10 % below the national average, the results of more able pupils are good, with about 10% gaining A\* in 2002.

### **Good features**

#### ***KS3***

- Pupils respond well in the oral sessions, they understand short spoken and recorded items. They are able to select relevant information to answer basic questions orally and in writing. Good progress is made in listening.
- Pupils are keen to volunteer answers and co-operate well in pair and group work. The majority are confident when speaking individually and in paired work when talking about familiar topics. They pose and answer questions on a variety of topics and give explanations for preferences. They confidently use basic patterns like ‘achos ..’ to give explanations. More able pupils justify their opinions.
- More able pupils speak accurately and reasonably fluently. Middle and lower ability pupils make sound progress, using basic constructions and vocabulary well.
- Pupils read aloud well. They understand short passages on familiar topics and respond well, making good progress.

- Pupils respond well in writing to a variety of stimuli. They mainly use familiar patterns correctly. Accuracy and punctuation of the more able are good.
- Standards of achievement among the Welsh first language pupils in KS3 and KS4 ranges from satisfactory to good. More able pupils produce good oral and written work. Reading standards are mainly good.

#### ***KS4.***

- Pupils work well in groups, following set tasks, and discuss topics effectively. They express opinions, occasionally using evidence. Only abler pupils, talk freely on a variety of topics.
- Able pupils read well showing good understanding of a range of material. More able pupils are beginning to respond to books and magazines, discussing the characters and the plot.
- More able pupils write accurately and interestingly.

#### ***Sixth form.***

- Current Y12 pupils follow the Higher Vocational Certificate of Education and mainly make good progress, building effectively on skills acquired in KS4. They are beginning to use the language outside the classroom. Research techniques are progressing well.

### **Shortcomings**

#### ***KS3***

- Middle and lower ability pupils make basic grammatical and punctuation errors. A number of these errors are repeated in their later work.
- Although pupils express opinions about stories or discuss content and characters, most do not read independently from a wide range of materials.

#### ***KS4***

- Middle and lower ability pupils are restricted in the number of topics that they can discuss confidently and their standards of accuracy, when writing, are low.
- The use of redrafting to improve standards of accuracy and the provision of a programme of reading for pleasure are not fully developed.

#### ***Sixth form***

- When discussing ideas and strategies pupils are, at present, reluctant to express extended ideas.

Since the last inspection the lack of group and paired work has been addressed and pupils receive ample opportunities to use the language in the classroom.

### **Design and technology**

Standards of achievement in design and technology are good in KS3. In GCSE examinations standards in food, textiles, resistant materials and graphic products are very good. Results in the 2002 GCSE examinations were well above local and national averages with 76% of pupils gaining A\*-C grades. Standards within A level design and technology were also good. All students achieved a grade.

## **Good features**

### ***KS3 & KS4***

- Designing skills are well developed. Pupils have a sound understanding of the process.
- Pupils understand and make use of technical vocabulary regularly and consistently.
- Pupils use the design process effectively, understanding the purpose of research, investigation and analysis, using it well as a resource in developing their design work.
- Pupils formulate precise and detailed specifications of their work.
- They reflect when developing project studies and contribute positively in the assessment of their work.
- Graphical and presentation skills are good and in some instances very good. Pupils design well through the use of informal and formal drawing skills. Good use is made of modelling.
- Drawing and sketching skills reveal innovative and creative outcomes which are supported by informative annotation and sensitive use of colour.
- Design folio work is always completed, well structured and individual in its nature.
- Pupils experience a range of materials and components in their designing and making activities and are able to demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of their application.
- Practical making skills are good, accuracy and well finished, completed products are strong features in departmental work.
- Pupils gain a positive, early experience of electronics and systems study in KS3.
- All pupils, including those with SEN receive sensitive support from staff and make good progress
- Pupils in all design and technology subject areas gain experience in the use of a variety of ICT applications, often making good use of them when designing, modelling and in the presentation of their work.

### ***Sixth form***

- Designing skills are well developed.
- Students have a secure knowledge of the design process.
- Research and investigative skills are comprehensively developed and make use of ICT applications where appropriate.
- Students communicate well, their graphical skills are good and they make use of a range of media.
- They demonstrate some innovative design ideas supported by a sound body of knowledge.

## **Shortcomings**

### ***KS3 & KS4***

- Standards are compromised by lack of modified tasks and support material for SEN pupils.
- An insufficiently broad use of ICT applications is made within all areas of the department.

Progress made since the last inspection is good. In KS3 & KS4, the quality of designing and making across all subject areas has improved. The use of ICT applications is emerging as an integral part of pupils' design and technology experience and provides increased opportunities for pupils to develop further relevant skills.

## **Information technology**

Standards of achievement in KS3 and KS4 are satisfactory. In the GCSE examination 2001, 27% of pupils gained passes at A\*-C. This was lower than local and national averages.

### **Good features**

#### ***KS3 & KS4***

- Pupils display some positive skills, using the mouse/keyboard effectively when making use of icons, menus and functions.
- They demonstrate some useful skills when using word processed text, often including graphical images imported from a variety of sources.
- Pupils demonstrate good capability in integrating software packages, making use of the internet and other sources of information to complete work.
- Some developing strength in most pupils' attainment in modelling and measuring. They are able to organise and combine information in various forms.
- A relevant approach and response to pupils' problem solving.
- Pupils handle information including number well through databases and spreadsheets. Completed work is appropriate to their age and ability
- Written work is generally of a good standard, oral work is clear and precise and pupils show interest and confidence when explaining the development of their project work. Some can identify problems, analyse information and generate solutions which they can sensibly evaluate and modify.
- All pupils, including those with SEN, make progress in lessons with positive attitudes to learning and some pride in their work. They work well independently and co-operatively.

### **Shortcomings**

- A variety of difficulties within the department have resulted in a discontinuity of provision in time and staffing. This has limited pupils' abilities to consistently develop a variety of skills.
- A minority of pupils lack understanding and confidence in developing an approach to their work.
- Lack of development of some modified tasks and support material for SEN pupils has a negative impact on standards.

Strategies are not yet established for the delivery of discrete ICT lessons alongside cross-curricular activities. Well structured liaison between the newly appointed head of ICT and subject heads requires development to ensure appropriate balance and progression in pupils' learning.

There has been some progress made since the last inspection. Studies at KS3 now offer relevant coverage of national curriculum requirements.

## **History**

Standards of achievement are satisfactory in KS3 and KS4. Sixth form standards are good. In 2002, 40% of the pupils who opted to study history at GCSE gained grades A\*-C; this is below the national average. In the A level examinations held in 2002, 80% of pupils gained grades A-C.

### **Good features**

#### ***KS3 & KS4***

- Pupils in KS3 have secure levels of background knowledge and their recall skills are satisfactory overall.
- Pupils have good chronological awareness and show increasing confidence in extracting accurate information from a variety of sources of historical evidence. They use the sources appropriately to justify their views and record their learning effectively.
- KS3 pupils use subject-specific vocabulary accurately and in the correct context.
- KS3 pupils generally have a secure understanding of the process of change and develop a growing ability to identify a variety of causes for change. Average and above average ability pupils make good progress in distinguishing between long-term and short-term causes for change. A significant number of these pupils develop confidence in adopting an investigative approach to historical problems and in presenting their findings appropriately.
- KS4 pupils develop a secure understanding of how to test sources of evidence for bias, reliability and usefulness. They learn to compare sources effectively and can successfully recognise and explain propaganda in source material.
- KS4 pupils make sound progress in further developing an investigative approach to their work; they tackle historical problems positively and with interest.
- Average and above average ability pupils at the upper end of KS3 and KS4 make good progress in organising their arguments by using source material effectively; they construct valid and convincing arguments and record their work appropriately. Many produce well planned pieces of extended writing and case studies, showing a growing recognition that historical events and problems are capable of differing interpretations by historians.

#### ***Sixth form***

- Although results in the 2002 AS level examinations were below the standards predicted in areas of the course, 64% of students gained grades A-C in the European history section of the examination.
- Students produce well planned essays providing good evidence of wide background reading, thorough research and careful planning; they ensure that the argument they present is well analysed and focused upon addressing the particular problem posed in the question. Note-taking skills are well developed and students have a sound body of notes from which to work.
- A significant number have good knowledge and understanding of historical debates and can synthesise the views of professional historians. Some show a growing facility to adopt a broad view of events and to relate them to events and influences occurring in other areas.

## **Shortcomings**

- Pupils' oral contributions to class discussions are often limited to providing brief, albeit accurate, responses to questions asked. They do not acquire sufficient experience in being challenged to develop and sustain an extended oral argument in lessons and group discussions.
- Standards of presentation of written work by a number of average and below average ability pupils vary widely, especially in KS3. Completion of written tasks is problematic among lower ability pupils in KS3.
- KS3 pupils are not consistently aware of a sufficiently wide range of historical interpretations. In KS3 and KS4, pupils lack an appropriately wide range of knowledge and understanding of the history and traditions of Wales.
- Pupils do not develop their ICT skills sufficiently through the history curriculum.

Satisfactory progress has been maintained since the last inspection.

## **Geography**

Standards of achievement, relative to pupils' abilities, are good throughout the school. Results at GCSE have improved in recent years and although currently slightly below national averages, figures demonstrate positive progress for the candidates. A level examination results in recent years have been significantly above national figures at both A-B and A-E grades.

### **Good features**

#### ***KS3***

- Pupils make good progress in acquiring the skills of geographical enquiry; they show good knowledge and understanding of introductory topics in both physical and human geography.
- They acquire a good knowledge of location through the regular use of atlases and of places; they apply their local and Welsh studies to regions and populations on a wider scale and their grasp of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig is improving.
- Basic geographical skills such as interpreting data and annotating diagrams and photographs develop well.
- Pupils increase their subject vocabulary of key words which they apply with precision.

#### ***KS4***

- Pupils make good use of previously acquired information and apply it constructively to their current work; they possess the skills to conduct effective independent research and produce assignments which show good recording, evaluation and presentation of evidence using a range of techniques.
- Viable explanations are offered for erosional features in highland areas; pupils detail how human influence can have both positive and negative effects on a fragile environment.
- They communicate well, especially orally and have an increasing vocabulary of relevant terminology which is used correctly and in context.

### ***Sixth form***

- Learning skills are well developed; communication and the application of number are used confidently in class and the wider key skills of problem solving and working with others are promulgated by an enquiry based approach in assignments and fieldwork.
- In their study of population, students display both high levels of accuracy and understanding and initiative in their interpretation of the Demographic Transition Model. There is effective linking of theory to actual case studies.
- They competently discuss more complex issues such as sustainable development and draw on their knowledge and understanding of the connections between different subject aspects.

### **Shortcomings**

- In KS3, whilst achieving standards commensurate with their abilities, the progress of a small minority of pupils is restrained by their short concentration span and inattention in class, carelessness with spelling in their written work and inaccuracy in terminology.

Standards have improved markedly since the previous inspection. The department has successfully addressed issues identified.

### **Modern foreign languages**

Standards of achievement are good in KS3, KS4 and the sixth form.

The proportion of the year group opting to study a modern foreign language in KS4 is higher than the average for Wales. In recent GCSE examinations, all pupils achieved an A\*-G grade. The percentage of the year group gaining an A\*-C grade was above the national average.

In recent examinations at A level, all students achieved an A-E grade and more than 50% gained an A-C grade in either French or German.

### **Good features**

#### ***KS3 & KS4***

- The majority of pupils listen well to the teacher, to the cassette and to each other.
- Listening comprehension skills are good and pupils need little repetition.
- Most pupils are confident speakers. They are keen to take part in classwork and volunteer answers readily.
- They work very well together in oral pair work.
- They have a good recall of vocabulary and speak with a good accent.
- Both boys and girls are active and enthusiastic in classwork.
- Pupils read aloud with confidence.
- They understand what they read in the coursebook and occasionally read from other sources for their own enjoyment.
- Pupils' understanding of the relevant grammar develops satisfactorily over the key stages.
- Pupils in KS4 successfully re-draft their work to improve the accuracy of their writing.
- Pupils across the whole ability range produce good extended writing.

- They regularly progress from written course book tasks to writing more independently about their own experience.
- Pupils taking a 2<sup>nd</sup> foreign language make good progress.

### ***Sixth form***

- Students understand the French or German spoken by the teacher throughout the lesson and respond appropriately, with little hesitation.
- They understand the gist of authentic recordings and can extract specific information.
- Most students speak with confidence, with good accent and intonation.
- They volunteer information readily and show initiative in developing and expressing their own ideas.
- They read aloud confidently and comprehension skills are good.
- All students write at length on a variety of topics.
- They can express their own ideas coherently in writing, showing increasing range and fluency in their use of language.

### **Shortcomings**

#### ***KS3 & KS4***

- A minority of pupils volunteer only short answers and do not use their initiative in oral work.

#### ***Sixth form***

- Some students have difficulty in transferring their knowledge of grammar to their own writing. They have persistent difficulty with accuracy and make careless mistakes.

Since the last inspection, there has been an improvement in standards. Standards are now consistently good in each key stage.

## **Art**

Standards of achievement in art and design are satisfactory in KS3 and KS4 and are good in the sixth form. Most pupils achieve the expected level at the end of KS3. The department does not yet analyse results by gender. In the most recent GCSE examination, grades A\*-C have significantly improved for boys and girls and are now nearer to the national average than earlier results. In line with the national picture, girls performed better than boys. One student entered the AS examination in 2001 and achieved a C grade. In A level entries, 43% achieved grade A-C and all achieved grade A-E.

### **Good features**

#### ***KS3***

- An understanding of how to use the essential elements of art is applied well in a range of two- and three-dimensional activities.
- An appreciation of the art of Wales and other cultures is applied imaginatively in pupils' own work.
- An appropriate art vocabulary is used when speaking and writing.
- The effect of colour is understood well from imaginative exercises.

- Measuring skills are used accurately when devising complex patterns.
- Pupils with SEN make progress due to the support material provided.

#### ***KS4***

- Pupils show a creative and imaginative response to tasks.
- From experimenting with a range of media, pupils successfully develop new craft skills.
- Influences gained from looking at art of other cultures are successfully developed in pupils' own original work.
- When looking at art, pupils express themselves well in their descriptive writing.
- Sketchbooks are used effectively to gather visual stimuli and work is imaginatively presented.

#### ***Sixth form***

- Students are very well motivated and work hard to apply their creative skills to produce a good body of work.
- Ideas are expressed with individual flair and imagination in a wide range of media.
- Practical work is well supported by sketchbooks which demonstrate good practice in the use of annotation to clarify and support ideas.
- Observational drawing and painting skills are enhanced by evening life-drawing exercises.
- Visits to art galleries enrich students' understanding of historical and contemporary art.

#### **Shortcomings**

- Limited time given to the development of observational drawing skills has an adverse effect on standards in KS3.
- Pupils at all stages do not use computers to develop their creative work.
- Accommodation in one room is poorly arranged and is subject to frequent disturbance during lessons, which distracts pupils.
- Pupils' awareness of the work of female artists is limited by a lack of suitable resources.

The previous report was generally favourable and identified few shortcomings. Progress has been satisfactory.

## **Music**

Despite recent staffing difficulties and constraints of accommodation inhibiting progress, standards, in KS3 and KS4, are satisfactory. There are no classes in music in the sixth form. The one GCSE candidate in 2002 gained a B grade.

#### **Good features**

##### ***KS3***

- Standards in performing, composing and appraising music are satisfactory, overall.
- Pupils in Y7 sing with a pleasing tone and secure intonation in up to three parts. Y8 pupils sing with enthusiasm.
- Pupils respond well and develop a good awareness of rhythm and beat by using body percussion. They perform individual parts on classroom instruments with a good degree

of accuracy. A few, more able pupils maintain good ensemble when performing with others.

- Previous evidence shows more able pupils improvise effectively and produce musically interesting compositions.
- Pupils have a competent awareness of musical elements. A few more able pupils make perceptive comments when appraising performances.

#### ***KS4***

- Most of the 16 pupils in Y10 and of the 12 pupils in Y11 make suitable progress in vocal and instrumental performing, commensurate with their ability and experience.
- When composing, a few more able pupils show initiative when planning the use of motifs and techniques to be adopted in their “Variations” compositions.
- A few pupils use appropriate terminology effectively when discerning musical features in music from different periods and styles.

### **Shortcomings**

#### ***KS3***

- Y8 pupils do not always sing with sufficient attention to musical detail and refinement of expression.
- Some pupils are unable to maintain a steady pulse when performing with others on classroom instruments.
- In composing, the ability and experience of pupils to explore a range of different sound sources and combine them imaginatively is limited.
- The skills of many pupils to appraise their own music-making critically are, in general, underdeveloped.

#### ***KS4***

- Certain pupils are less experienced and secure in group performance.
- A few pupils have yet to plan and organize ideas adequately for their “Variations” compositions.
- Some pupils have difficulty in identifying and describing musical features in recorded extracts.

The use of ICT, as an aid to enhance work in composing, is limited in both key stages.

Peripatetic tuition provided for one in twenty two of the pupils on the school roll, together with a range of vocal and instrumental extra-curricular groups of good standard, complement the work of the department. These make a worthwhile contribution to the life of the school and the community. Progress has been consolidated since the last inspection.

### **Physical education**

Standards of achievement in KS3 are satisfactory. In KS4 they are good. GCSE results in the past two years are consistently above average. A level results are good.

## **Good features**

In both KS3 and KS4 pupils dress appropriately and smartly for practical activities and respond positively. They make good progress in the different activity areas, despite limited facilities.

### **KS3**

- Pupils are attentive, enthusiastic and enjoy participation and learning.
- They work conscientiously as individuals, co-operate well in pair and group activities and persevere to improve personal performance.
- Pupils understand the benefits of an active and healthy lifestyle, the effects of exercise on the body, and they are keen to improve personal fitness and skill levels.
- Pupils in Y7 and Y8, with limited previous experience, make good progress in gymnastics and games.
- Skills are further enhanced in Y9 through well-structured practical lessons and examples of good co-ordination and body control are evident.
- Pupils are able to practise, repeat and refine actions, using teacher observation and feedback to good effect.
- They develop the ability to plan, observe and evaluate performance and suggest areas of improvement.
- Good individual performances in all activities.

### **KS4**

- Pupils are able to practise, repeat and refine actions with greater control and accuracy and demonstrate increased efficiency and fluency in body movement.
- They are capable of sustained physical activities and have an increasing understanding of health related issues and skill development.
- In games and gymnastics the activities are performed enthusiastically.
- Pupils recognise progress in performance and can accurately identify targets for improvement.
- GCSE course work is well prepared. Pupils display a mature attitude toward their studies; written work is completed with varying degrees of success. Achievement is in line with ability.
- Examples of very good individual performances in both practical and written assignments. Teacher preparation and guidance is used effectively as pupils develop evaluating and analytical skills to enhance their understanding.

## **Shortcomings**

### **KS3**

- Y7 pupils have limited opportunities to develop their practical skills in gymnastics; they generally have limited previous experiences.
- Y8 and Y9 pupils persevere with skill acquisition but at times limitations in body management skills, control and accuracy in performance lead to incomplete work.

### **KS4**

- Some written assignments are incomplete in GCSE coursework.
- Some limitations in body management skills and quality in movement.

### ***Sixth form***

- There is no curriculum provision for non-examination students to take part in practical activities.

There is a wide range of well organised extra-curricular activities through school clubs, inter-school fixtures and visits which enhance and enrich the curriculum. Many individual and team successes bring credit to the school through county and national recognition.

Since the last inspection standards have been maintained and, where necessary, improved upon.

## **Religious education**

Standards of achievement are good overall in KS3 and satisfactory in KS4. The percentage gaining GCSE grades A\*-C in the short course in KS4 is good.

### **Good features**

#### ***KS3***

- Pupils across the ability range have good factual knowledge of the units of work studied, which reflect the requirements of the local agreed syllabus.
- They are developing an understanding of what religions have in common, how and why they differ, and the diversity of belief and practice within individual religions.
- Pupils present written work well. They narrate, explain and describe features of religious belief and practice in different forms and styles to match audience and purpose.
- Less able pupils have an appropriate vocabulary of key terms and can organise and present factual information about religious events and beliefs.
- In Y8, visits to the local church reinforce and deepen their knowledge of Christianity and how Christians worship.

#### ***KS4***

- All pupils are entered for the GCSE accredited short course.
- Most pupils have secure knowledge and understanding of the syllabus and of the current issues and problems confronting society and individuals.
- In discussion most pupils are honest, and on the basis of their knowledge they can generalise and form an opinion. They successfully consider contemporary issues from different standpoints, including the religious standpoint.
- Most pupils recognise the experiences which they share with people of different faiths, and they use their information well to further understand how other people's cultures respond to their traditional experiences, for example, in marriage and divorce.

### ***Sixth form***

- No lessons were observed during the week of the inspection. A suitable scheme of work is in place.

## **Shortcomings**

### **KS3**

- At times there is an overdependence on worksheets, which restricts pupils' opportunities to learn in different ways through a variety of media.
- Little use is made of ICT resources and visits to places of worship and religious interest to enrich pupils' learning.

### **KS4**

- In some lessons immature comments from a minority of pupils disrupt the pace of the lessons.
- There are only limited opportunities for pupils to express and argue a position on moral issues and sharing an understanding of religious perspective upon these issues.
- In both key stages there is a shortage of artefacts to stimulate the learning and the use of paired and group work is under-developed

Standards in KS3 have improved since the last inspection and have been maintained at KS4.

## **Religious studies**

Standards of achievement are satisfactory. All students entered for A level achieved grade A-E and are comparable with grades achieved in other subjects.

### **Good features**

- Students have a generally secure level of knowledge and understanding of the content area of the syllabus.
- They gather and record information appropriately and there is a secure organisational dimension to their written work.
- They discuss issues at an appropriate level, have good note-taking skills and produce written work with a relevant range of references.

### **Shortcomings**

- Students are reluctant to engage in class and group discussions and some find the comparison of source material difficult.
- Their written work tends to be mainly narrative with little analysis and many describe events rather than address the questions posed.

Since the last inspection standards have remained constant.

## **Personal, social and health education**

Standards of achievement are good throughout the school..

### **Good features**

- In KS3 and in KS4, the majority of pupils listen attentively to others and to audio-visual resources and respond appropriately.

- Pupils work well as individuals, in pairs and in groups, showing some high levels of collaboration.
- These pupils are confident and courteous when explaining their ideas to others and are able to frame their own questions. They can generate and participate in lively discussion.
- Y7 pupils quickly get to know the school, with good emphasis on procedures for their help and support.
- Y8 pupils understand the influences in their lives, the nature of friendship and their own personal values.
- Y9 pupils respond well to their first contact with careers and guidance, becoming aware of a variety of tasks, their costs and budgets.
- Y10 pupils become aware of a variety of topical issues which including aids and assertive behaviour.
- Y11 pupils' understanding benefits from experiencing a good range of citizenship examples, which include parliament, crime and punishment and the use of the internet.
- Sixth form students' responses from learning about the different techniques and purposes of essay writing and an introduction to completing UCCA forms.

### **Shortcomings**

- A small minority of pupils in Y8, 9 and 10 are inattentive and show little interest in the pastoral and guidance programme.
- Some specialist rooms used for teaching the subject are not appropriate and reduce the potential of the provision.

Since the last inspection, the subject provision has been extended to include all year groups.

### **Drama/Expressive Arts**

Drama is offered as a GCSE option in KS4. Expressive arts is offered as a GCSE option in KS4, and as an option at AS/A2 in the sixth form.

Standards of achievement in drama are good. Standards of achievement in expressive arts are very good. GCSE results in drama in 2001 were in line with the national average at grades A\*-C, although they declined in 2002. GCSE results in expressive arts in 2001 and 2002 were above the national average at grades A\*-C and all pupils entered achieved a grade. Sixth form results in expressive arts in 2001 and 2002 were above the national average and all students achieved a grade.

### **Good features**

- Pupils in drama and expressive arts work well together in groups, planning and preparing imaginative responses to stimulus materials very cooperatively, and appreciate each other's performance.
- Pupils in drama and expressive arts perform quite confidently and without inhibition. They read scripts clearly, improvise dialogue and move comfortably, showing awareness of the use of stage space.

- Pupils in expressive arts demonstrate skills in dance, song, drama, music and the interpretation of art and can combine these elements imaginatively to create an integrated performance sequence.
- In their written work, all pupils make good use of a variety of reference material to support their coursework. They show perception in the analysis of their activities and the capacity for self-evaluation.
- Pupils make a good contribution to the life of the school and the community, as well as enhancing their own personal development, through participation in public performance.

### **Shortcomings**

- Many of the pupils undertaking the courses have difficulties with the writing requirements because of their low levels of prior attainment and need considerable teacher support to complete the required tasks.
- Many KS4 pupils are not confident speakers and have difficulty in sustaining oral improvisation.

Since the last inspection, drama has ceased to be offered as a subject to pupils in KS3, although they can continue to experience it through the drama club and participation in school productions. Drama remains as an option in KS4 and progress in it since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall but variable in terms of GCSE results. Progress in expressive arts has been good. At GCSE, there is a consistently high proportion of good grades and in the sixth form, increasing numbers of pupils are achieving high grades.

### **Business economics**

This subject has been introduced since the last inspection.

Standards of achievement are good in Years 12 and 13. Grades A-C in the A level examinations held in 2001 were gained by 66% of students.

### **Good features**

- Students have a good background knowledge and understanding of the relationship between economic theory and its application to the practical operation of business. They can apply their knowledge intelligently to real life situations and economic problems.
- They compile relevant data and use the information gathered effectively to tackle problems and to present their findings in a variety of forms. They demonstrate a growing ability to think analytically and to be critical in their consideration of their data and its relationship to economic problems. Problem-solving skills are well targeted and well developed; pupils present their findings confidently.
- They have good calculation skills and are workmanlike in recording their learning. Graph and diagram work is careful and well presented.
- Subject-specific vocabulary and terminology is used accurately. Students develop good ability to recognise managers' problems and the skills and information needed to tackle economic challenges. They have a good level of understanding of the operation of the law of supply and demand.

- Good response to challenging questioning and ideas. They develop their written and oral arguments coherently and persuasively. Good knowledge of marketing strategies. Well constructed arguments to illustrate good and bad practice in managing people.
- They read an appropriately wide range of up-to-date textual material.
- Good note-taking skills build up a sizeable body of information to record their learning.

### **Shortcomings**

There are no significant shortcomings.

## **Environmental science**

The subject is offered as an A level option. Standards of achievement are good.

### **Good features**

- Students have a secure general knowledge of the topics and issues studied. Questions are usually answered in depth and they express their own views fluently on sustainable development and man's impact on the environment.
- They make good progress in planning, organising and prioritising tasks.
- They acquire good key skills and apply them successfully in a range of contexts; they use correct terminology to explain their work both orally and in writing.
- Students work productively as individuals and often co-operate in small groups; they collaborate readily with many examples of peer-group assistance.

### **Shortcomings**

- A few students have become overdependent on the teachers for information and guidance and are reluctant to contribute or volunteer answers in class.

The subject was not taught at the time of the last inspection.

## **Health and social care (AS and A level)**

This course has successfully been introduced to replace the previously offered GNVQ. Standards of achievement are very good at AS level and good at A level, with a small number of students. In 2001 the 3 AS level students all achieved high grades. One continued to A level and achieved a grade B. Unvalidated results for 2002 show an entry of twelve students, the majority of whom achieved high grades. Three of these students are continuing to A level.

### **Good features**

- Very good detailed understanding of examination board requirements leads to high achievement by students. Examination results are very good with 100% pass rate.
- Students acquire detailed theoretical knowledge about issues, which underpin work in the health and social sector.

- Good use is made of outside agencies to promote subject understanding including, placements, visits and speakers and this has had a positive effect on standards.
- Units of work are of a high standard and are well presented, making good use of ICT.
- Regular written tests ensure that students learn their work and that high standards are maintained.

### **Shortcomings**

- Not all students display an eagerness to think for themselves in order to apply the good theoretical knowledge that they possess to real situations.
- To encourage more students to continue to A-Level from A/S Level.
- Students do not have a suitable well-resourced learning base and many lessons take place in technology practical rooms.

## **8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

### **8.1 Progress since the last inspection**

1. *Ensure that the appropriate level of challenge, control and pace of lessons is more consistently applied for all pupils to reach their highest potential and improve the quality of learning where there are deficiencies.*

Senior staff have been trained to observe and assess the quality of teaching and learning. Observations are recorded and feedback is given. Where deficiencies have been found, support has been provided and targets for improvement have been set and subsequently reviewed.

2. *Set targets and devise strategies to improve standards of achievement in GCSE mathematics; IT in KS3 and its application across the curriculum; history and geography at A level and a general raising of good standards at KS3.*

Significant improvements have been made in all these subjects. Progress in KS3 is clear and evidenced by the improved core subject indicator. KS3 IT is now an entitlement for all pupils.

3. *Extend the setting of priorities and targets for improving and monitoring standards, school policies and procedures by senior and middle management in particular.*

This area is an increasing strength of the school. Target setting, monitoring and review are well embedded in the school's culture.

4. *Increase the level of support available for non-statemented SEN pupils in mainstream classes at KS3 in particular.*

Support is now available. The level is kept under review, according to budget considerations.

5. *Improve aspects of KS3 and KS4 curriculum planning relating to history, geography, religious education, art and music, and statutory religious education in the sixth form.*

These shortcomings were successfully addressed.

6. *Finalise current developments to ensure a more effective approach to financial procedures and monitoring in closer partnership between key personnel.*

The financial manual has been reviewed regularly. It is clear that financial procedures and monitoring are in good shape.

7. *Continue to upgrade the unsatisfactory features of the site, accommodation and resources as funds become available and deal with health and safety issues raised.*

The school has a health and safety committee on which all departments are represented. Accommodation and resources have improved. Progress and priorities are reviewed regularly. Members of the governing body's relevant committee regularly "walk" the school.

8. *Continue to improve the quality of pupils' assemblies and ensure compliance with the statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship.*

Arrangements for collective worship comply with statutory requirements.

## **8.2 Key issues for action**

This is a successful school. The headteacher, staff and governors should build on the improvements already achieved. In order to raise standards, quality and provision of education further, they should:

- maintain the school's positive ethos, and the consistency of teaching and learning,
- raise standards in those subjects identified as satisfactory in the report,
- implement the review and plans for ICT across the curriculum,
- support the development of independent learning and problem-solving skills, particularly for KS3 pupils, by:
  - monitoring the effect of class size on standards of achievement,
  - the sharing and dissemination of existing good practice which successfully increases pupils' interest and reduces their dependence on teachers, and
  - increasing opportunities for pupils' to reflect on their own progress.

### *Acknowledgement*

*The registered inspector and team wish to thank the governors, headteacher, staff and pupils for their co-operation and courtesy before and during the inspection.*

## APPENDIX

### A. Basic information about the school

Name of School	Ysgol Bryn Elian
School type	Foundation
Age -range of pupils	11-18 years
Address of school	Windsor Drive Old Colwyn Colwyn Bay
Post-Code	LL29 8HU
Telephone Number	01492 518215

Headteacher	Mr S Matthews
Date of appointment	1 September 1996
Chair of Governors/ Appropriate Authority	Mr P Capper
Registered Inspector	Mr JE James
Dates of inspection	30 September – 4 October 2002

### B. School data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	174	167	169	172	148	59	41	930

<i>Total number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	52	2	52.56

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil:teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	17.99:1
Pupil:adult (fte) ratio in special classes	5:1
Average teaching group size	24.8
Overall contact ratio	72.55%

<i>Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection</i>								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole school
Summer 2002	91.75	92.27	89.56	88.82	96.62	93.34	99.22	92.07
Spring 2002	91.11	90.25	89.54	88.32	91.91	91.34	95.65	91.16
Autumn 2001	94.51	93.44	91.52	90.98	92.73	94.42	97.14	93.53

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	19
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	21

## C. Results of National Curriculum assessments and public examinations

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results: 2002															
Total number of pupils in Y9: 173															
Percentage of pupils at each level															
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP
EN	Teacher assessment	School	0	4.62			0	0.58	7.5	22	30	23.7	11		
		National	0	1			0	2	9	22	34	21	8		
	Test	School	0	5.78			0	0	5.2	22	38.1	22.5	4		
		National	0	4			0	0	8	23	31	21	9		
MA	Teacher assessment	School	0	2.92			0	1.17	7.02	11.7	32.8	26.3	18.1		
		National	0	1			0	1	9	21	26	27	14		
	Test	School	0	6.4			0	0	6.4	16.8	28.9	23.7	16.8		
		National	0	6			0	0	8	22	23	27	12		
SC	Teacher assessment	School	0	5.8			0	0	5.8	12.1	30.6	31.2	14.5		
		National	0	1			0	1	9	22	32	24	10		
	Test	School	0	6.4			0	0	7	14.5	33	27.2	12.4		
		National	0	4			0	0	7	20	32	24	11		

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school:	63	In the school:	60
In Wales:	52	In Wales:	50

D - Pupils excepted under statutory arrangements from part 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

EP - Exceptional Performance, where pupils at Key Stage 3 perform above level 8.

<b>For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, CoE, GNVQ and NVQ</b>			
Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2001: 139			
<b>The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2002:</b>			
	School	UA 2001	Wales 2001
were entered for 5 or more GCSEs	98	89	86
achieved 5 or more GCSE grades A*-C	54	54	50
achieved 5 or more GCSE grades A*-G	97	88	84
achieved GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language)	40	38	35
entered at least one CoE, GCSE short course or GCSE	100	98	97
achieved one or more GCSE grades A*-C	84	77	73
achieved one or more GCSE grades A*-G	98.6	94	92
achieved no graded GCSE	0.72	6	8
achieved one or more CoE only	0	2	3

<b>For pupils aged 16, 17 and 18, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs</b>			
Number of pupils aged 16, 17 and 18 in January 2002: 46			
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2002: 39			
Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2002: 7			
	School	UA 2001	Wales 2001
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C	41	66	62
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E	97.5	94	93
Average points score per candidate	17	19	18

## **D. The evidence base of the inspection**

The school was inspected by a team of 17 inspectors, who spent in excess of 53 inspection days in school collecting evidence and inspecting all subjects. Inspectors observed 223 lessons in full or in part. All teachers present were seen teaching, most on a number of occasions. Planned discussions were held with the majority of teachers, including members of the senior management team and year and subject heads, with non-teaching staff, support workers and the chairman and members of the governing body. In addition, there were informal discussions with both teaching and non-teaching staff, and an informal lunchtime meeting was held, to which governors, members of the local community, and many professional and visiting agencies to the school were invited. In a meeting with the registered inspector, members of the governing body discussed action which had been taken since the previous inspection.

All the work of a representative sample of pupils from each year group was examined, and planned discussions were held subsequently with these pupils. Pupils' records, past work, work during lessons and displays around the school were scrutinised. Inspectors spoke informally with many more pupils, and examined their work during class visits. The inspectors visited many tutorial and registration periods and all assemblies, together with a range of out-of-school activities and meetings. Pupils were observed at lunchtimes, travelling to and from lessons, and coming to and from the school.

Prior to the inspection the registered inspector visited the numeracy school held in the summer holidays and attended the school's Awards Evening in September.

The school helpfully provided an extensive range of informative documents which was analysed before and during the inspection. The inspection team carefully considered 170 responses made by parents to questionnaires distributed before the inspection and the comments by the 8 parents at the pre-inspection meeting conducted by the registered inspector.

## E. Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
JE James Registered Inspector	English	Context; main findings; standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning; standards achieved in key skills across the curriculum; quality of teaching; quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement; leadership and efficiency; staffing, accommodation and learning resources; progress since the last inspection; key issues for action; 6 <sup>th</sup> form coordination
JH James Lay Inspector		Behaviour and attitudes; attendance; partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions; partnership with industry
AV Edwards Core Team	Mathematics Personal & Social Education	Support, guidance and pupils' welfare; staffing and learning resources
ATF Woods Core Team	Science coordinator (Chemistry)	Assessment, recording and reporting; curriculum
H Evans Core Team	Religious Education	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; special educational needs
E Bowyer	Geography Environmental Science	
GS Davies	Science (Physics)	
E Forster	Art	
AW Jones	Music	
DM Jones	Science (Biology)	
G Leech	Support English Drama Expressive and Performing Arts	
T Lewis	Welsh	
A Newman	History Business Economics	
P Swinnerton	Design and Technology Health and Social Care	
Dr K Watson	Design and Technology coordinator Information Technology	
G Williams	Physical Education	
A Woods	Modern Foreign Languages	