

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

**CAERLEON COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL
Cold Bath Road
Caerleon
Newport
NP18 1NF**

School Number: 680-4059

Date of Inspection: 21-24 February 2005

by

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W110/8205**

Date: 27 April 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/29/04

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Caerleon Comprehensive School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of **Caerleon Comprehensive School** took place between **21st and 24th February 2005**. An independent team of 10 inspectors, led by **Miss Glynis Owen** undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

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

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

LIST OF ACRONYMS IN COMMON USE

A	Advanced
AS	Advanced Subsidiary
AVCE	Advanced Vocational Certificate in Education
CAT	Cognitive Abilities Test
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GEMSS	Gwent Ethnic Minority Support Service
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IEP	Individual Educational Plan
ILS	Individual Learning Systems
IT	Information Technology
KS	Key Stage
NC	National Curriculum
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
PSE	Personal and Social Education
SEN	Special Educational Needs
UA	Unitary Authority
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Caerleon Comprehensive School is an 11-18, mixed community school, in the unitary authority of Newport. There are 1,533 pupils on roll, including 264 in the sixth form, compared to 1,405 and 246 respectively at the time of the last inspection. There are roughly equal numbers of boys and girls.
2. The large majority of pupils come from the small town of Caerleon. Others come from Usk, Goytre and Little Mill in Monmouthshire, Ponthir in Torfaen, and Langstone in Newport. Some pupils come from the city of Newport.
3. The vast majority of pupils come from socially and economically advantaged areas. Less than 4% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, compared to 15.7% nationally.
4. Pupils represent the full range of ability, though there is a significant majority of pupils of average ability and above. Nearly all speak English as their first language. A few pupils speak Welsh and less than 2% speak other languages, including Mandarin, Swedish, Bengali, Japanese and Urdu.
5. There are 29 pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN), 25 boys and four girls, and a further 133 have been identified as needing some support. These figures are well below national comparators.
6. The sixth form offers a range of Advanced Subsidiary (AS) and Advanced (A) 2 level courses and expects students entering the sixth form to have achieved appropriate success in General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations, prior to commencing A level studies.
7. Since the last inspection in October 1999, there has been a new deputy headteacher. Also, two assistant headteachers have joined the senior management team, from within the school. A technology block was completed just after the last inspection and a new building of 16 classrooms has just been opened.
8. Partnerships with local schools and the college have been strengthened to extend 14-19 provision, though few students choose to combine courses with other institutions. There has been a significant increase in information and communication technology (ICT) resources in the last six years, with the addition of three ICT rooms in the technology building and four in the new 'Isca' building just opened, as well as an increase in other areas.

The school's priorities and targets

9. The school's mission statement is 'to maximise the potential of all in a happy, caring and disciplined environment'. Four main priorities have been identified in its school development/improvement plan for 2004-2007. These are:

- raising standards of achievement;
- curriculum development;
- the deployment and continuous professional development of all staff; and
- resources, accommodation and the site.

The targets for external examinations are as follows:

Key stage 3:

	2005	2006	2007
English attaining level 5 or above	85%	86%	84%
Mathematics attaining level 5 or above	86%	88%	85%
Science attaining level 5 or above	89%	89%	87%

Key stage 4

	2005	2006	2007
Pass rate A*-G	98%	99%	97%
Pass rate A*-C	75%	79%	73%
Pass rate Entry Level	100%	100%	100%
Pass rate 5 A*-G	94%	96%	94%
Pass rate A*-C	71%	75%	71%
Core Subject Indicator of pupils achieving at least grades C in English, mathematics and science in combination	56%	58%	53%

Summary

10. Caerleon Comprehensive School continues to be a very good school with many outstanding features.

Table of grades awarded

Key Question	Inspection grade
KQ1	1
KQ2	1
KQ3	1
KQ4	1
KQ5	1
KQ6	1
KQ7	1

11. This is an unusually high level of performance and consistency. The grades match those in the school's self-evaluation report.
12. As the school underwent a short inspection, there are no reports on individual subjects.

KEY STAGE 3 and KEY STAGE 4

Standards

13. The outstanding features are:
- the national test and public examination results;
 - the very good progress which pupils of all abilities make; and
 - pupils' motivation, behaviour and personal development.
14. Results in national tests at the end of key stage (KS) 3, have improved each year and are well above national averages. They place the school in the upper quartile compared to schools with a similar intake. In particular, boys' literacy skills are outstanding.
15. Results in the GCSE examinations are also well above national averages in all indicators. They have remained above average compared to those of schools with a similar intake and mostly place the school in the upper quartile. The percentage of grades A* and A is well above the national average. Only one pupil has left school without qualifications in the six years since the last inspection.
16. The most able, pupils of average to lower ability and pupils with SEN all make very good progress. Specific talents are encouraged; particular needs are identified and support is given, to good effect.

17. Pupils' key skills develop very well, particularly communication skills. Standards in ICT have improved considerably since the last inspection and the recent new facilities are already having further impact.
18. Pupils' personal development is also a high priority. They are well motivated, confident young people, aware of others and of the wider world. They behave very well and are polite and personable to visitors. They also realise the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. The annual attendance rate last year (93%) is better than in most comprehensive schools.

The quality of education and training

19. The outstanding features are:
 - the quality of teaching and formal assessment;
 - the curricular provision which meets learners' aspirations and prepares them for the future;
 - the range and quality of extra-curricular activities; and
 - the pastoral support and guidance for pupils, including those with SEN.
20. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
33%	56%	10%	1%	0%

21. These figures are well above the national targets for the quality of teaching to be grade 3 and above in 95% of lessons, and grades 1 and 2 in 50%. They are also above the figure of 75% of lessons judged grade 1 or 2, in inspections in Wales last year. In a third of lessons, there were outstanding features, a high proportion.
22. Teachers are well qualified and have high expectations of pupils. There are good working relationships and there is very effective behaviour management. Lessons are carefully planned, with good use of resources, including well-produced materials for homework and revision purposes.
23. Assessment is regular and accurate. Pupils know what to do to improve their work.
24. The curriculum meets learners' aspirations and is flexible in providing many opportunities for different abilities and interests. Particularly good features are the setting arrangements, the initiatives for literacy and numeracy and the early entry to GCSE.
25. The curriculum is extended by a vast programme of extra-curricular activities, in which a significant number of pupils gain national, and sometimes international, recognition, particularly in music, debating and sport. The number of visits abroad is

notable. The school orchestra's success in bringing the School Proms 2003 to a finale at the Royal Albert Hall is also an outstanding achievement.

26. Long-standing and successful partnerships have been developed with local employers and providers, to extend pupils' knowledge of the world of work. Careers guidance and work-related activities are of high quality.
27. The school has a caring and inclusive ethos that effectively guides, supports and challenges learners. There is very good support for pupils with SEN, including those with disabilities. The close curricular and pastoral links with primary schools enable pupils to settle quickly. The more recent initiatives to extend the most able at KS3 augur well.
28. The personal and social education (PSE) programme and the good use of time with tutors support pupils' personal development well. Assemblies and the daily act of collective worship in tutor groups also contribute to pupils' understanding of and respect for others. Pupils show a mature understanding of a range of issues related to social and cultural diversity.

Leadership and management

29. The outstanding features are:
 - the vision and direction given by the headteacher, senior management team, governors and middle managers;
 - the corporate ethos of learning, discipline and high achievement, together with strong pastoral care;
 - the high standards of professionalism and effective links between all sections of the school and wider community;
 - the embedded culture of self-evaluation and the quest for continuous improvement; and
 - the effective use of all available resources – human, material and financial.
30. The headteacher gives dynamic leadership in strategic and financial planning, self-evaluation, empowering staff and maintaining high standards of work and behaviour amongst pupils. At the heart of his leadership is personal contact with and support for individuals.
31. He is very ably supported by a senior management team with the same values, members of which work closely with staff and pupils. They are effective both as a team and in their own specific areas of responsibility.
32. Governors have considerable expertise and experience and take a leading role in planning, monitoring and evaluation. They are highly supportive of the school.
33. The quality of middle management, both academic and pastoral, is very good and is unusually consistent.

34. There is a culture of reflection and there are thorough procedures to monitor performance. Priorities are identified and development planning has clear targets for improvement, at all levels of management and in all areas of the school.
35. Teaching and support staff are effectively deployed and continuous professional development enhances the contribution they make to the life and work of the school. The school holds the 'Investor in People' award.
36. Resources have increased since the last inspection, and are generally good. The two very attractive new buildings for design and technology, and for languages and ICT have eased pressure on accommodation. However, there are still areas where accommodation is inadequate in terms of quantity or quality, particularly science, music, physical education, and the canteen.
37. Careful financial planning and management have resulted in good levels of resourcing generally, and very good new provision. The school uses its available resources very effectively and gives very good value for money.

SIXTH FORM

38. The outstanding features highlighted in each section at KS3 and KS4 apply equally to the sixth form. They are evident in specific terms as follows:

Standards

39. Examination results are above national averages, with an increase in the percentage of top grades (A and B) each year recently. As nationally, girls have generally done better than boys.
40. Students have well-developed key skills in communication, numeracy and ICT. Since the last inspection they have gained accreditation in key skills in a variety of schemes. Currently, there is emphasis on everyone gaining level two in ICT and lessons are provided for students as appropriate.
41. Students make good progress during their time in the sixth form. The vast majority stay for two years and gain the qualifications to enable them to move onto the next stage. Motivation is high. Over 95% of students each year proceed to Higher or Further Education. Students recognise the need for good attendance and are punctual to school and to lessons.
42. Students are self-disciplined, mature young adults who are very personable to visitors. They speak readily of a range of interests and successes in extra-curricular activities as well as in their studies.

The quality of education and training

43. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed, a very small sample of 13 lessons, was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
31%	69%	0%	0%	0%

44. Teachers' very good subject knowledge enables students to explore issues in depth. There is increased emphasis on encouraging independent learning as preparation for Higher Education and students regularly undertake research. Teachers regularly share objectives for learning, examination requirements and criteria for success with students.
45. The quality of assessment and monitoring is very good. Students receive feed-back on how to improve their work, are involved in self-assessment and set targets for future progress. Students having difficulties are identified at an early stage and support is given.
46. There is an appropriate range of courses, with added breadth achieved through key skills, PSE lessons and a vast range of extra-curricular activities.
47. The close links with local businesses and industry inform students' knowledge of the world of work. The Young Enterprise scheme, in Year 12, encourages team-building and communication skills.
48. Pastoral support and guidance enable students to make informed choices about their future and support their personal development. Visiting speakers and tutors raise awareness of various issues appropriate to students' ages, aspirations and interests.

Leadership and management

49. The sixth form is very well led and managed as a unit within the school as a whole. There is a good balance between providing a disciplined environment and allowing students a greater measure of independence. Expectations are clear. Students speak of the strong corporate ethos within the sixth form and of its friendliness as a community.
50. There is a clear management structure and effective communication between the head of sixth form, sixth-form pastoral staff and subject teachers. Students' progress is kept under regular review. The link to senior management is also facilitated by the head of sixth form's membership of the senior management team.
51. Self-evaluation is very thorough and effective and the views of students are taken into account. Areas for development are identified and planned, with adequate resources provided.
52. The sixth-form building provides a teaching, learning and social base for students, though lessons are also taught in specialist areas throughout the school. Some of its rooms are small for the size of classes, and the common room is crowded. Nevertheless, the school uses what is available appropriately and has provided some ICT facilities in that building.
53. The whole-school resources for ICT in the newly opened building will increase access for students considerably. The careers library, near to the school library, is a good resource.

Progress since the last inspection

54. There has been good progress on ICT across the curriculum since the last inspection, though the most recently acquired facilities have only just become available. There has been considerable spending on resources, and planning for more consistent use of pupils' skills. The acquisition of interactive whiteboards is also impacting on teaching and learning styles.
55. The two new buildings represent very good progress in improving the accommodation, but there remain some areas of the school which need further improvement.
56. The format of reports has changed for the better, though not all comments or targets are specific enough yet in identifying strengths, weaknesses, and ways forward.
57. More time is allocated to religious education in the sixth form. The Welsh dimension is planned more effectively in schemes of work though it is not yet a strong feature in regular practice. The school has kept vocational qualifications under review and encouraged partnerships with providers. However, there has been little interest from pupils, and current provision is centred on GCSE and A level courses with a few exceptions.

Recommendations

R1. Extend the outstanding features in teaching, learning and assessment even more widely across the school.

R2. As funds become available, improve aspects of the accommodation.

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

Standards

Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

58. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

Pupils' success in attaining agreed learning goals

KS3 and KS4

59. The school's national test and public examination results are outstanding features.

60. In 2004, in the KS3 tests, 79% of pupils reached at least level 5 in the three core subjects combined, compared to 57% nationally. This figure placed the school in the top 25% of schools with a similar intake. Results have improved year by year, and recent results have all been in the top quarter, compared to similar results in Wales.
61. Results in each of English, mathematics and science have also been in the top quarter for at least two of the last three years. Boys' results in English were outstanding in 2004, with 81% of boys achieving at least level 5.
62. At GCSE, 75% of pupils gained at least five grades A*-C, compared to 51% nationally and these results again placed the school in the top quarter compared to schools of a similar intake. Sixty per cent gained grades A*-C in all three core subjects, compared to 38% nationally, a result which also placed the school in the top quarter, compared to results of similar schools.
63. Across the full range of grades (A*-G), pupils were also very successful. In 2004, 96% of pupils gained at least five grades A*-G, and, since the last inspection in 1999, only one pupil has left school without qualifications. The gap in performance between boys and girls narrowed significantly after the last inspection but has widened in the last two years.
64. Target-setting has been very accurate. The school has just exceeded its challenging targets in virtually every indicator in the last three years, in both KS3 tests and at GCSE. Apart from some fluctuation related to the ability of the year group, results since the last inspection represent a consistently high level of performance.
65. Pupils of differing abilities achieve very well, regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background.
66. Communication skills are very good. Pupils are confident, articulate and keen to respond. They listen attentively, asking questions to clarify their understanding. Reading and writing skills are also very good. Pupils scan material for information and they undertake research. Presentation, technical accuracy and fluency in writing are all of a high standard.
67. Numeracy skills are good. Pupils develop these skills in mathematics and apply them appropriately in a range of other subjects.
68. Since the last inspection, pupils' skills in ICT have improved considerably and are now good. They make effective use of these skills in a range of subjects and in independent learning. The new facilities are already making further impact.
69. Pupils' bilingual competence has also improved. Ninety-three per cent of pupils gain qualification at GCSE, compared to 62% nationally. Pupils make consistent progress in Welsh second language at both key stages and their age-related bilingual competences are developing well. Pupils sometimes listen to or read dual-language resource materials, but use of incidental Welsh is not commonplace.

Sixth form

70. Examination results have been consistently above the national average since the last inspection. In 2004, the average points score was 22, compared to 19 locally and 20 nationally. All students gained at least one pass. The percentage of grades A and B has shown steady improvement in the last six years. Girls have mostly done better than boys, as nationally. Results have been close to challenging targets, either just above or just below.
71. Students have well-developed key skills. Since the last inspection they have gained accreditation in a variety of schemes. Currently there is emphasis on everyone gaining level two in ICT and lessons are provided as appropriate. Standards in communication and numeracy are at least good.

Pupils' progress in learning

KS3 and KS4

72. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress and this is an outstanding feature of the school.
73. The most able absorb new knowledge quickly and have very good key skills. They are prepared to think for themselves, undertake research, solve problems and make deductions. These skills were developed in the majority of lessons seen, but not all. At GCSE in 2004, 27% of entries were graded A* or A, compared to 17% nationally.
74. Pupils with SEN also make very good progress. Their needs are identified and a number of strategies improve their key skills, particularly literacy and numeracy. Improved scores in reading and spelling tests indicate very good progress at KS3. At the end of KS4, all pupils have left with qualifications in the last six years bar one and 96% left last year with at least five GCSEs.
75. Pupils of average to lower ability make equally good progress. Their very good key skills, particularly literacy, aid progress. Both boys and girls are well motivated to succeed and expectations are largely fulfilled.
76. Pupils of all abilities know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve, from verbal and written feed-back.

Sixth form

77. Students readily accept that they need to acquire a large body of knowledge in Advanced level studies. They study issues in depth; research and independent thinking are an integral part of study.
78. Results in the large majority of subjects show that students have made good progress in the sixth form, by comparison with their performance at GCSE. The vast majority stay for two years and over 95% of students in Year 13 proceed to Higher or Further Education.
79. Students have a good understanding of how well they are doing. They receive regular verbal and written feed-back from subject teachers, and form tutors review their progress with them at specific times of the year. Targets are set for future progress.

The development of pupils' personal, social and learning skills

KS3 and KS4

80. Pupils of all abilities are well motivated. They show respect for their teachers, visitors and other learners. Behaviour is very good both in lessons and around the school.

81. Pupils realise the importance of good attendance and the annual attendance rate last year of 93% is higher than in most schools. Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons.
82. There is a strong culture of learning, achievement and high expectations, which is an outstanding feature of the school. Pupils expect to work hard and have high aspirations for their future.
83. Their personal development is a high priority of the school. Pupils are confident young people, aware of others and of the wider world. At all ages they have the personal and social skills to be able to interact easily with visitors, to whom they are polite and friendly.
84. Pupils demonstrate good awareness of a range of social and cultural issues. In tutor groups some pupils are ready to lead others in reflection, by preparing for the daily act of collective worship. There is respect for others in general, and respect for diversity. The school has an inclusive ethos and pupils with disabilities are well integrated.
85. The high quality careers guidance and the strong links with organisations in the community result in pupils being well prepared for their future career and taking an active part in a number of community-based projects.

Sixth form

86. Students are well motivated young adults with a variety of talents and interests and they develop these further in the sixth form. They show confidence without arrogance and are very personable to visitors. Behaviour is very good, based on self-discipline and very good relationships between teachers and students.
87. Students realise the importance of good attendance for academic success and sixth-form attendance is better than in most schools. There is a business-like approach to being punctual to school and to lessons.
88. Students confidently work independently and think independently. They take a leading role in numerous activities, some in the local community, and excel in them. For example, those who debate have recently returned from international competition, where they were successful. In numerous fields, particularly in music and sport, they receive national, sometimes international recognition.
89. Students are aware of the importance of good personal and social skills and chart their aptitudes and interests in their Progress File. They also demonstrate good awareness of issues relating to social and cultural diversity in the PSE sessions, as well as in their subject lessons. They are very effectively prepared to take their place in the community and in the workplace.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

90. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

How well teaching and training meet learners' needs and the curricular or course requirements.

KS3 and KS4

91. The quality of teaching in 77 lessons observed in KS3 and KS4 was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
33%	56%	10%	1%	0%

92. In 89% of lessons observed in KS3 and KS4, teaching was judged to be at least good with no important shortcomings. This well exceeds the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) target that teaching should be grade 2 or better in 50% of classes. Teaching was graded a 3 or better in 99% of classes, which exceeds the WAG target of 95%.
93. The school's teaching grades are also above the latest figure for inspections in Wales in the last year where 75% of lessons were judged to be grade 2 or better. In a third of lessons, there were outstanding features, a high proportion, and well above the percentage nationally in inspections last year (20%).
94. There is a culture of achievement in the school, and the good quality of teaching is a strong contributory factor to this. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and they set tasks which appropriately challenge and motivate pupils of all abilities. This has a positive effect on standards and pupils' attitudes to learning.
95. Teachers are well qualified and have a good knowledge of their subject. They are committed and enthusiastic and keep up-to-date by continuous professional development. As a result they are keenly aware of the requirements of the National Curriculum (NC) and external examinations. There is outstanding planning in schemes of work and lessons to meet these requirements.
96. All teachers revise prior learning and indicate links with previous and current work. In many lessons, pupils are made aware of the objectives at the start of the lessons and at the close they are required to summarise what they have learned.
97. Teachers know pupils very well. The outstanding planning of lessons takes full account of the differing needs of individuals and their prior attainment. The development of key skills is planned in schemes of work, though the school recognises the need to develop, further, numeracy and the use of ICT across the curriculum.

98. There is consistent implementation of the school's policy for equal opportunities. Pupils' social, educational, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds are considered in lesson planning. Individual education plans (IEPs) are drawn up carefully. The Welsh language is rarely used outside Welsh lessons, though Welsh culture is promoted in a range of subjects.
99. Lessons are well structured. Tasks are appropriately timed and the pace is brisk. Most teachers use effective questioning to ensure understanding. There is outstanding provision and use of resources of good quality devised by teachers. Interactive whiteboards are also often used to good effect.
100. In some subjects, teachers use strategies which involve the development of problem-solving skills and independent approaches to learning. These investigative strategies represent outstanding practice and stimulate pupils of all abilities. They are especially effective in motivating boys. Other teachers rely on a more directed approach to teaching and learning which does not fully secure the active engagement of learners.
101. Teachers work well with classroom learning assistants. The good collaboration ensures that pupils with SEN have the support that is required to access the curriculum successfully and make good progress.
102. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good so that the learning environment is friendly and supportive. Outstandingly good behaviour management leads to an ethos of co-operation, courtesy and mutual respect.
103. Homework is set by all teachers. Tasks are varied and often challenging. There is no set timetable for homework so that on some days there is much to do and on other days there is little.
104. The amount of work covered and produced by pupils is impressive. Teachers make effective use of pupils' work for displays in classrooms and corridors. These models help to stimulate and motivate pupils. Many teachers also give freely of their time outside lessons to extend and broaden pupils' learning experiences.

Sixth form

105. The quality of teaching in the 13 lessons observed was judged as follows:-

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
31%	69%	0%	0%	0%

106. In all lessons observed, teaching was judged to be at least good with no important shortcomings. The short inspection of the school afforded opportunities to observe a small sample of lessons only.
107. Teaching of consistently good quality is a strength of the school. It contributes to students' learning and achievement of good standards.

108. Teachers have outstandingly good subject knowledge. They continuously keep up-to-date so that examination requirements can be met.
109. The planning of lessons is very good. Teachers take account of the individual abilities of students and of their prior learning. There is a high level of challenge and good development of subject knowledge, skills, understanding and terminology. Most lessons are conducted at a brisk pace.
110. A wide range of appropriate strategies is used to good effect. Students are encouraged to work independently and collaboratively in order to seek information, clarify understanding and form opinions. Students are required to participate in class discussions, presentations and demonstrations. This contributes significantly to raising standards.
111. A wide range of resources is provided and used effectively.
112. There are outstandingly good working relationships between teachers and students. The ethos in lessons is of purpose, respect and tolerance. Students are encouraged to achieve irrespective of gender, race or disability.
113. Teachers regularly share with students objectives of learning, the criteria for success and examination requirements. Thus, students are well prepared for external examinations.

The rigour of assessment and its use in planning and the improving of learning.

KS3 and KS4

114. Teachers monitor and review pupils' progress regularly and there is good support for pupils. In most subjects, pupils are aware of what they need to do in order to improve. The teaching and support for pupils with SEN are good and the work set ensures progress towards targets identified in IEPs.
115. The school has an effective system for the collecting, analysing and sharing of assessment data. Information gathered in Year 7 is based on KS2 NC results, Cognitive Abilities Tests (CATs) and an average score achieved in internal school examinations. The information is updated as pupils progress through the school so that data are collated for all pupils in all years.
116. Monitoring is effective. Information is appropriately shared with all teachers. Assistant headteachers monitor progress, individuals are tracked and under-achievement is identified. Mentoring and support are provided by heads of year. Parents are informed of progress. The system is particularly effective in Year 11. The school recognises the need to develop further the role of the form tutor in the monitoring process.
117. The school meets statutory requirements for assessing and reporting pupils' achievements.

118. Whole-school target-setting is particularly accurate. Assessment by subject teachers is also accurate and fair. Pupils' work is marked regularly but there is inconsistency in the quality of day-to-day marking between subjects and teachers. In the best practice, teachers' comments are helpful in identifying strengths, weaknesses and targets for improvement. There is more consistent practice in the end-of-unit testing.
119. Some teachers give good verbal feed-back to pupils, inform them of the criteria for success and involve them both in self-assessment and peer assessment. The school plans to further develop these good practices across the curriculum.
120. Assistant headteachers, heads of year, heads of department and subject teachers keep records that are comprehensive, manageable and helpful. Assessments usually inform planning.
121. Annual reports are helpful in that they require teachers to indicate standards in classwork, homework and conduct. Subject examination marks are given and subject teachers summarise achievement. However, there are shortcomings in that their comments do not consistently identify specific targets for improvement. Pupils' comments include personal targets. The quality of these is variable since self-assessment is not embedded consistently in practice.
122. Parents are appropriately involved in the reporting process. They are invited to comment on reports and contacted if there is a cause for concern. Parents of pupils with SEN statements are fully involved in the process of review.

Sixth form

123. In the sixth form, the quality of assessment and monitoring is very good. Subject teachers regularly share with students objectives of learning, the criteria for success and examination requirements. Students understand how improvements may be made and are involved in planning their own progress.
124. Subject teachers have a good knowledge of their students' strengths and weaknesses. They support students with helpful diagnostic comments on their work and orally in lessons. Data are used consistently to predict achievement and monitoring is regular. Those who are not achieving their target grades are identified and supported.
125. Formal monitoring of overall performance is effective and takes place each half-term. Subject teachers respond to common key indicators, potential underachievers are identified and there is supportive early intervention. Form tutors, heads of year and the head of school are involved in the process and parents are contacted.
126. Marking is regular and accurate. It reflects examination board criteria. Records of students' achievements are helpful and manageable.
127. An annual full report is usefully discussed with both students and parents.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

128. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

The extent to which learning experiences meet learners' needs and interests.

129. The school's curriculum meets the needs of its pupils. It is accessible to all, including those with physical disabilities and special educational needs. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced to ensure that the aspirations of all pupils can be realised. All but one pupil has left school with qualifications since the last inspection. There is good continuity from KS2, with strong pastoral links with primary schools and developing curricular links.
130. At KS3, the setting arrangements make a positive contribution to the quality of the learning experiences, particularly for pupils who have difficulties, and who are taught in small sets. Drama and German are offered, though the arrangements for timetabling the second modern foreign language are not yet ideal, and the school plans to review them.
131. At KS4, there is a good range of GCSE courses, and alternative curricular provision for the small number of pupils who are disaffected, in partnership with other providers. There are some fast-track groups, and early entry to GCSE.
132. The sixth-form curriculum offers a broad and flexible programme of AS and A2 courses, which meets the individual preferences and ambitions of all students who stay on at school. Students do not choose, currently, to combine courses at school and at other sites.
133. The development and delivery of key skills are well established. They have been incorporated into subject schemes of work and the literacy and numeracy initiatives at KS3 are very good. ICT has been effectively planned across the curriculum.
134. There is an exceptional range of extra-curricular activities, which enriches the formal curriculum. The sporting and musical activities are particularly strong and outstandingly successful, for pupils and students receive national and international recognition. One recent highlight was the school orchestra's success in bringing School Proms 2003 to a finale. Students have also received international recognition in debating.
135. The school promotes pupils' and students' personal development very effectively and this is an outstanding feature. Their spiritual and moral development is nurtured successfully through opportunities to reflect on their own beliefs and experiences in year and tutor group assemblies, the PSE programme and other curricular subjects. Pupils and students show tolerance and respect for adults and towards each other.

136. The school is also highly successful in promoting the social development of pupils. They mix easily, relationships being very good throughout the school. The variety and richness of Welsh and other world cultures are well promoted throughout the curricular programme and extra-curricular activities.
137. The working relationship between parents and the school is extremely positive and productive. Links with the community are outstanding. Pupils are involved in an extensive programme of community activities and projects ranging from musical events to conservation work. Sixth formers are particularly active in supporting work in the local hospital, play schemes and local charities.
138. The broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum complies with all statutory requirements.

The extent to which the learning experiences respond to the needs of employers and the wider community

139. There are strong, long-established links with local employers which extend the curriculum, provide for Year 11 and sixth-form work experience and enhance the work-related education programmes. The structures and relationships in respect of careers education and guidance and work-related education schemes are outstanding features. Sixth formers in particular benefit from the outstanding links established with local industry and business.
140. Numbers in Welsh have increased and the percentage gaining a grade at GCSE is well above that in most schools. However, time for Welsh at KS3 and KS4, apart from full-course Welsh, is only adequate. Welsh is rarely used in lessons other than Welsh. The school has a Welsh language policy and statements on bilingualism but these do not extend to a comprehensive policy on bilingualism.
141. Some pupils have good opportunities to use Welsh through extra-curricular activities such as residential visits to Nantgwrtheyrn and Llangrannog. The school encourages an awareness of bilingualism by adopting some use of bilingual signs and the organisation of a popular annual eisteddfod. The '*Cwricwlwm Cymreig*' element is built into subject schemes of work.
142. The school successfully promotes equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. It ensures that pupils with disabilities are fully integrated alongside their peers. There is support teaching for those for whom English is an additional language.
143. A number of subjects such as geography, science, design and technology and PSE contribute to the promotion of education for sustainable development and global citizenship. The Environment Club is involved in a number of projects such as paper re-cycling, planting flower beds and tree planting. The school has won the national award for 'Schools in Bloom' on more than one occasion. There is no formal programme or policy statement on sustainable development, although an audit is currently being undertaken to assess the present position and to plan further.

144. Pupils successfully develop problem-solving and decision-making skills and at all key stages they are introduced to entrepreneurial activities. The Young Enterprise scheme, offered to students in Year 12, enables students to demonstrate their outstanding team-working and communication skills.
145. The pupils' learning experiences, promoted by the curriculum and supported by an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities and work-related education, prepare them very effectively for lifelong learning and for responsible citizenship.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

146. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

The quality of care, support and guidance to learners

147. The school has very clear planning and management structures for effective support, care and guidance for all pupils. This is an outstanding feature. Pastoral teams work very well together and with relevant outside agencies. Pupils know to whom to go for support and guidance and those interviewed by inspectors were confident that problems would be dealt with promptly and sensitively.
148. The effectiveness of partnerships with parents, carers and employers is also an outstanding feature. Attendance at school events such as parents' and options' evenings and school concerts is impressive. Many parents, from the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting, were passionate in their praise for the support and guidance given to pupils, and very few were critical.
149. Relationships with employers are good. The careers event for pupils and students in Year 9 to Year 13 is very well attended, and pupils benefit from contact with a wide range of work-experience providers. Work-related education follows national guidelines.
150. The school provides good option and careers guidance. Links with the careers service and with industry are effective in providing guidance. Pupils are given individual mentoring and feel that they are well supported. Most continue from Year 12 into Year 13 and onto Higher Education. Students in the sixth form are particularly well guided in making choices for Higher Education.
151. Support for induction and transition is an outstanding feature. Well-managed induction programmes in Year 7 and Year 12 are very effective in ensuring that pupils and students settle quickly.

152. A well-structured programme of PSE, delivered through timetabled lessons and tutor time, effectively guides and supports pupils' learning. Appropriate specialist provision is made for the delivery of sex education and drugs education. Pupils and students value the programme. It follows national guidelines appropriately.
153. The school has very effective strategies in place for monitoring pupils' and students' punctuality, behaviour, attendance, progress and personal development. The reward system celebrates a range of achievements, including good behaviour and attendance. This is valued by pupils and motivates their learning. Action is taken promptly if there are problems.
154. The school has appropriate procedures in place for dealing with pupils' health and safety and child protection issues. Members of the school's senior management have responsibility for health and safety and child protection. Staff and governors are made aware of procedures and policies. Pupils' healthy development is encouraged through fitness programmes in physical education and information on healthy eating in PSE. The school is not yet accredited as part of the Healthy Schools' programme.

The quality of provision for additional learning needs

155. Pupils with SEN are identified early and their needs are assessed appropriately at both key stages. All pupils with SEN, including those with physical disabilities, are fully integrated into the school and follow the NC.
156. Response to the Code of Practice is good and IEPs are reviewed regularly. The quality of the IEPs is very good. Targets are monitored and are specific to the needs of individual pupils.
157. The SEN co-ordinator, teachers and learning support assistants provide very good support in different teaching situations. They have a good knowledge of their pupils. Learning support assistants are a valuable resource within the school. Appropriate and successful initiatives support pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy.
158. Effective strategies are in place to meet incidents of low-level disruption and the needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is a close relationship with outside agencies which support the school in this work. Pupils with specific learning difficulties are well supported by a specialist support teacher.

The quality of provision for equal opportunities

159. Mechanisms for supporting and guiding pupils are inclusive. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported by the Gwent Ethnic Minority Support Service (GEMSS). Form tutors and heads of year know the pupils very well and guide individuals.

160. The promotion of gender equality and equally high expectations of all pupils are outstanding features of the school. Boys and girls both achieve very well, though there has been some variation in GCSE results in some years. There is a girls' football team; many girls choose physics and many boys choose modern foreign languages.
161. The school's equality policy includes the statutory requirement for race equality. Good race relations are encouraged and are evident in practice.
162. The school encourages and expects good behaviour in all aspects of school life. No incidents of bullying or oppressive behaviour were observed during the inspection. The school's anti-bullying policy is clear. Pupils interviewed and the vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about the effectiveness of measures for dealing with incidents.
163. The school takes very effective measures to ensure that pupils with disability are fully integrated into the life of the school. This is an outstanding feature.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

164. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

How well leaders and managers provide clear direction and promote high standards

165. There are many outstanding features in leadership and management, in terms of effectiveness in giving clear direction and promoting high standards, at all levels of management, and in terms of consistency in practice.
166. The school's mission statement – 'to maximise the potential of all in a happy, caring and disciplined environment' – is widely fulfilled. These aims are shared and understood by all sections of the school and wider community. The school effectively promotes pupils' academic abilities, their talents in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and their personal development.
167. The headteacher gives dynamic leadership in strategic and financial planning, in self-evaluation, in empowering staff and in maintaining high standards of work and behaviour amongst pupils. At the heart of his leadership is personal contact with, and support for individuals. His leadership, by example, is highly effective.
168. In this he is very ably supported by the senior management team, which has the same values. Each member is effective in his or her own areas of responsibility and they work very well as a team, with the headteacher. They are also a strong presence

around the school, well known by staff and pupils. Their expectations are high and they monitor both formally and informally to ensure that these are met.

169. The formal links between senior and middle managers are effective in giving direction to and supporting the work of academic and pastoral staff. Two formal reviews each year are held, which discuss performance, set targets and plan future development. The quality of these is evidence of the reflective culture within the school and the continuous quest for improvement. There is also much informal contact between senior and middle management.
170. The quality of middle management, both academic and pastoral, is very good and is unusually consistent. Middle managers give clear direction to their teams, monitor practice effectively and set targets for the future. Morale among the staff is high, there is a strong sense of teamwork and a collaborative culture among the staff as a whole.
171. The school has built very good partnerships with other providers in the community, business and industry. Whilst pupils and students take up many opportunities regarding work-related education and extra-curricular activities through these partnerships, relatively few choose to combine courses at school with courses at other providers.
172. The collaboration with teachers from other schools and with Higher Education institutions has been useful in researching teaching and learning styles. Good practice has been disseminated to staff and has had a positive impact, with further plans in place.
173. The school's success owes much to the very good leadership which has high expectations and empowers others to take pride in that success, through the quality of their contribution. The school has made further progress, from a very good base at the time of the last inspection.

How well governors or other supervisory bodies meet their responsibilities

174. The governing body has a wide range of expertise and experience and fulfils its leadership role very effectively. The quality of strategic management and evaluation by governors is an outstanding feature of the school.
175. Governors are fully involved in setting the priorities of the school in its development planning. Many have served the school for a number of years and have both the vision and detailed knowledge which enable them to decide upon appropriate long-term priorities. The two new buildings and the very good new ICT equipment are testament to the wisdom of their long-term planning and financial management.
176. Governors also monitor and evaluate performance effectively through a number of strategies. The chairman regularly meets the headteacher, attends leadership team meetings and meetings with the unitary authority (UA) when targets are discussed.

All governors are linked to subject departments and attend annual reviews. Performance data are discussed thoroughly and the ten sub-committees regularly review and up-date school policies.

177. Governors support the school's activities by regularly attending its functions and support its work appropriately as critical friend. They are also evaluating their own performance as a governing body, currently.

178. All legal requirements are met.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

179. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade

How effectively the school's performance is monitored and evaluated

180. The school's self-evaluation report is comprehensive, evaluative and clearly identifies the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. The findings of the inspection team match those of the school in all key questions.

181. The school has a well-established culture of self-evaluation. An outstanding feature of the school's work on self-evaluation is that it has a clear focus on agreed areas for development.

182. Leaders and managers are very well informed about the areas for which they are responsible. The school has developed very effective procedures to evaluate standards and provision.

183. The school uses a broad range of evidence, including regular and systematic classroom observations, analysis of performance information, feed-back from examination boards and a range of surveys. There is a very thorough and detailed analysis of test and examination results.

184. The in-depth annual review involving the head teacher, curriculum leader, link manager, link governor and UA Adviser is an outstanding feature of the evaluation process. These reviews are evaluative, identify areas for development and provide a clear focus for the academic year.

185. Self-evaluation procedures ensure that there is a strong and effective link between school and departmental priorities. Improvement plans contain clear information on priorities and targets, planned actions, responsibility, timescales and resources.

186. The school frequently seeks the views of pupils, parents, staff and groups outside the school. Recommendations made by the school council are taken seriously and pupils feel that they are listened to. This information is carefully analysed and used effectively to inform self-evaluation procedures.
187. The school is very successful in involving staff at all levels in the self-evaluation process. Leaders and managers have developed a strong evaluative culture which is shared with all staff. The vast majority of staff understand and contribute towards meeting the targets identified.

The effectiveness of planning for improvement

188. The quality of the school's self-evaluation and performance management procedures provides a strong foundation for school and departmental development plans.
189. The school development plan has a clear focus on four areas of priority that are appropriate for school improvement. The plan clearly identifies targets, tasks and personnel, and planned developments within a realistic timescale. The plan also highlights the success criteria and how progress is monitored and evaluated.
190. Departmental development plans are closely linked to whole-school plans. They are detailed and incorporate whole-school priorities well within the different subject requirements. Targets are clear and monitoring systems are well managed.
191. Leaders and managers make very good use of available resources to address the priorities identified in the development plans. At both whole-school and departmental level, managers constantly strive to provide sufficient resources to support the priorities identified.
192. Plans and strategies have realistic time-scales. The school development plan is based on a three-year period. However, all plans have a one-year operational plan to maintain a sharper focus on improvement. The progress made in achieving agreed objectives is reviewed regularly and, where necessary, strategies are modified and adjusted.
193. Overall, the school's work on evaluation and improvement planning is very effective. Over the last five years, the school's actions have led to improvements in the standards achieved by pupils and students and the quality of education.
194. Significant improvements have been achieved in the provision for ICT across the curriculum and in the accommodation for design and technology, the new teaching block and AstroTurf facilities. Some progress has been made on the three curricular issues and the quality of reporting to parents. However, although standards of achievement are good in the respective subjects, the quantity and quality of accommodation in science, drama and physical education need further improvement, as do the canteen facilities.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

195. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

The adequacy, suitability and use made of staffing, learning resources and accommodation.

196. The school has enough teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum at KS3, KS4 and in the sixth form. The deployment of teachers is good. A number have been in post for many years and are fully committed to the school. Recent appointments that include newly qualified teachers complement this. There is good support for teachers new to the profession, including subject mentors. The quality of school-based training meets their needs well.
197. There are enough administrative staff to enable the school to function smoothly. Suitably qualified and trained support staff work effectively with teachers to support individual pupils with SEN. There are also enough appropriately skilled non-teaching members of staff to give effective support to teachers, pupils and students in the medical room, laboratories, workshops, the library and IT suites. Appropriate training is in place to develop their roles.
198. The provision of resources enables the curriculum to be delivered in all areas and the capitation issued is fair. The opportunity exists for departments to bid for extra funds but this must, appropriately, be linked to their departmental development plan and the school development plan.
199. The number of books in the library is low for a school of this size. The stock was culled recently to ensure that it is up-to-date. The school makes very good use of resources outside the school to enrich the curriculum.
200. The recently acquired 'Isca' block has greatly increased the amount of teaching space available for some subjects and eased pressure on the accommodation generally. There are also more IT rooms available now, which can be booked by other curricular areas. The quality of this building and of the design and technology block is outstanding.
201. However, there remain shortcomings in some areas. Accommodation for science is limited with 20% of science lessons taught out of laboratories. The dining room and hall are relatively small for the number of pupils on roll and the latter is used for examinations, which restricts its availability. The use of the gymnasium is also curtailed, for this reason, and the changing facilities for physical education and games are cramped. Some teaching rooms are small for the size of groups.
202. The drama accommodation in a demountable classroom, although an improvement since the last inspection, is still small when dealing with large groups. Accommodation for music is also small.

203. Apart from the ICT rooms, there are interactive whiteboards in classrooms, which teachers put to good use. Digital cameras are now available and are being used to provide resources for some subjects. The sixth-form block and the staff resources room also have appropriate ICT facilities, as does the library.

How efficiently are resources deployed to achieve value for money?

204. The school manages its budget most effectively and this is an outstanding feature. The allocation of funds to areas within the school is based on best value principles and expenditure is measured against perceived outcomes. The budget is reviewed regularly to ensure it is on track and the UA provides an in-depth analysis of budget headings for the school.

205. The school has been pro-active and successful in locating and obtaining additional funds to support initiatives in various fields from resourcing to curricular schemes. The finance committee of the governing body is fully involved in all aspects of financial planning and management.

206. Spending decisions on all aspects of the school are made to match school requirements and development plans. The school has given due attention to the few suggestions for improvement made in the most recent auditors' report.

207. The extent to which the school uses its available resources effectively is an outstanding feature. Teachers are very well matched to their subject specialism and when there have been long-term absences, specialist teachers have been engaged, to ensure that standards are maintained. Continuing professional development for all staff is good and they are effectively managed.

208. Efficient and effective use is similarly made of learning resources and the available accommodation.

209. In its self-evaluation, the school reviews its use of resources. When measured against its outcomes, the school gives very good value for money.

School's response to the inspection

The headteacher, staff and governors of Caerleon Comprehensive School welcome the Estyn report following the inspection undertaken in February 2005, and that the **'school continues to be a very good school with many outstanding features'**. The awarding of the highest grade in all seven key questions confirms the professional and positive manner with which the teaching staff, support staff and governors discharge their duties, and recognises the many outstanding features of the school. Such positive endorsements will enable the school to build on these very high standards for even further improvement.

Learning and teaching have long been recognised as our core function, and it is therefore particularly pleasing to report the exceptional standards observed by inspectors, when 89% of lessons at key stages 3 and 4, and all lessons in the sixth form, were

judged to be at grade 2 or better. The school places great emphasis on our students' performance in external examinations, and it is pleasing to note that inspectors recognise this as an outstanding feature, and that since the previous inspection our results consistently rank among the highest in Wales. It was also gratifying to note that both the progress made by students of all abilities, and the provision of extra-curricular activities were judged to be outstanding features.

Equally as important as the quality of learning and teaching at the school, is the level of care, guidance and support. Again, it is gratifying to be awarded with the highest grade in this category. A culture, which is a 'happy, caring and disciplined' one, remains at the centre of what we do and it is pleasing to note that the motivation, behaviour and personal development of our students were judged to be outstanding.

We strongly believe that it is essential that leadership, in the complex management of large schools such as ours, be both visionary and transformational and that such leadership is distributed to all levels of the institution. It is, therefore, particularly pleasing that the team found this to be the case at all levels of management, 'which is unusually consistent,' with the corporate ethos of learning, discipline and high achievement; the embedded culture of self-evaluation; the effective links with the wider community; together with the effective use of all available resources, judged to be outstanding features.

We are pleased to note that inspectors have commented most positively on the progress made on the key issues following the last inspection. They note that there has been good progress in ICT across the curriculum, and that the recent completion of the 'Isca' block will allow for even further development. We recognise that in spite of an improved reporting system, further developments are necessary in setting additional targets for improvement. Although good progress has been made in providing the Welsh dimension across the curriculum, further development is necessary. In relation to vocational courses, the additional accommodation provided by the completion of the 'Isca' block will enable us to explore the provision of meaningful courses in this area. We respect and recognise, however, the inspectors' judgement that some areas of accommodation need further upgrading.

To enhance learning, our development plan already includes developing the 'assessment for learning' agenda, which highlights the need to use formative marking and assessments more effectively to enable our students to set themselves realistic targets, and understand how to make further progress towards these targets. We also note the potential of further sharing so much of what has been identified as outstanding across all areas of the school.

The positive endorsement of our school means that we can confidently move forward and build on the many outstanding features that are highlighted in the report for even further improvement.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Caerleon Comprehensive School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Address of school	Cold Bath Road Caerleon Newport
Post-code	NP18 1NF
Telephone number	01633 420106

Headteacher	Mr A G Davies
Date of appointment	June 1995
Chair of governors	Mr J T Kirkwood M.B.E.
Reporting inspector	Miss G Owen
Dates of inspection	21-24 February 2005

Appendix B

School data and indicators

Year group	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y13	Y14	Total
Number of pupils	262	240	270	254	243	154	110		1533

Total number of teachers

	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	81	15	87.8

Staffing information

Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	17.46:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	

Average teaching group size	22.7
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	75.9%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole School
Term 1	94.5	94.3	93.1	92.6	92.3	92.7	91.9	93.0
Term 2	93.5	93.7	90.8	92.1	96.5	94.9	98.5	94.3
Term 3	96.3	94.7	93.8	92.8	92.3	94.7	94.1	94.1

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	3.1%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	28 temp. 0 perm.

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results: 2004

Total number of pupils in Y9: 253

Percentage of pupils at each level

			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP
English	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	1.2	0	0	0	4.3	11.5	30.0	34.4	18.6	0	
		National	0.4	0.8	0	0.2	0.4	1.7	8.1	21.3	33.6	23.5	9.4	0.2	
	Test	School	0	3.2	0	-	-	-	4.0	9.9	33.2	30.0	19.4	-	
		National	0.5	3.5	1.3	-	-	-	7.5	20.4	32.6	22.7	10.1	-	
Mathematics	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0.4	0	0	0	1.2	7.5	13.4	38.3	23.7	15.4	
		National	0.3	0.6	0	0.2	0.2	0.9	6.8	18.9	25.7	31.6	13.7	0.3	
	Test	School	0	2.4	0.4	-	-	-	2.4	8.7	14.6	40.7	30.8	-	
		National	0.3	5.1	0.7	-	-	-	5.1	17.2	19.9	36.0	15.0	-	
Science	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0.8	0	0	0	0.4	7.5	22.9	47.8	20.6	0	
		National	0.3	0.7	0	0.2	0.1	0.4	6.0	20.1	32.8	27.1	11.6	0.1	
	Test	School	0	2.8	0	-	-	-	1.2	5.9	19.4	35.2	35.6	-	
		National	0.3	4.0	0.2	-	-	-	4.7	16.6	32.5	28.2	13.0	-	

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

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	81.0	In the school	79.4
In Wales	57	In Wales	57

Public Examination Results:

For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ	
Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2004	225
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	53

The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2004:	School	UA	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	96	89	87
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	75	46	51
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	96	86	85
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	60	34	38
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	100	98	97
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	95	71	75
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent	100	93	93
attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent	0	7	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	0	2	3
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1	0		
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2	0		

For pupils aged 16, 17 and 18, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs	
Number of pupils aged 16, 17 and 18 in January 2004	254
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2004	252
Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2004	2

	School	UA	Wales
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C	78	62	68
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E	95	92	95
Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects	22	19	20
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ at level 2	0		
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Advanced or NVQ at level 3	0		

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

This short inspection was carried out by a team of ten inspectors, who spent the equivalent of 37 days at the school, and were joined by a nominee from the school. They met as a team before the inspection.

Inspectors visited:

- 90 lessons or part lessons, 77 at KS3 and KS4, and 13 in the sixth form; and
- A sample of assemblies and tutor periods.

There were meetings with:

- The headteacher, nominee, staff, governors and parents before the inspection;
- All members of the senior management team, a governor and many middle managers and support staff; and
- Groups of pupils representing all year groups in school.

Members of the team scrutinised:

- The work, in all their subjects, of three pupils in Y7-11;
- Samples of pupils' and students' work in lessons visited;
- Comprehensive documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection; and
- Responses from parents to a questionnaire.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Miss G Owen, Rgl	KQ1, KQ5
Mrs L Bithell	KQ2
Mr H Llewelyn	KQ3
Mrs J Williams	KQ4
Mr G Davies	KQ6
Mr P Francis	KQ7
Mrs J Down	ICT
Mr Z Davies	Bilingualism
Mr G Griffiths	SEN provision
Mr G Jones	Contributions to KQ1, KQ3, KQ4, KQ7

Acknowledgement

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

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

A SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS

**CAERLEON COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL
Cold Bath Road
Caerleon
Newport
NP18 1NF**

School Number: 680-4059

Date of Inspection: 21-24 February 2005

by

**MISS GLYNIS OWEN
W110/8205**

Date: 27 April 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/29/04

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Caerleon Comprehensive School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of **Caerleon Comprehensive School** took place between **21st and 24th February 2005**. An independent team of 10 inspectors, led by **Miss Glynis Owen** undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This summary report may be reproduced for non-commercial educational purposes but only as a whole and provided it is reproduced verbatim without adaptation and the source and date thereof are stated.

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

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

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Caerleon Comprehensive School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Address of school	Cold Bath Road Caerleon Newport
Post-code	NP18 1NF
Telephone number	01633 420106
Headteacher	Mr A G Davies
Date of appointment	June 1995
Chair of governors	Mr J T Kirkwood M.B.E.
Reporting inspector	Miss G Owen
Dates of inspection	21-24 February 2005

Context

The nature of the provider

1. Caerleon Comprehensive School is an 11-18, mixed community school, in the unitary authority of Newport. There are 1533 pupils on roll, including 264 in the sixth form, compared to 1405 and 246 respectively at the time of the last inspection. There are roughly equal numbers of boys and girls.
2. The large majority of pupils come from the small town of Caerleon. Others come from Usk, Goytre and Little Mill in Monmouthshire, Ponthir in Torfaen, and Langstone in Newport. Some pupils come from the city of Newport.
3. The vast majority of pupils come from socially and economically advantaged areas. Less than 4% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, compared to 15.7% nationally.
4. Pupils represent the full range of ability, though there is a significant majority of pupils of average ability and above. Nearly all speak English as their first language. A few pupils speak Welsh and less than 2% speak other languages, including Mandarin, Swedish, Bengali, Japanese and Urdu.
5. There are 29 pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN), 25 boys and four girls, and a further 133 have been identified as needing some support. These figures are well below national comparators.
6. The sixth form offers a range of Advanced Subsidiary (AS) and Advanced (A) 2 level courses and expects students entering the sixth form to have achieved appropriate success in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations, prior to commencing A level studies.
7. Since the last inspection in October 1999, there has been a new deputy headteacher. Also, two assistant headteachers have joined the senior management team, from within the school. A technology block was completed just after the last inspection and a new building of 16 classrooms has just been opened.
8. Partnerships with local schools and the college have been strengthened to extend 14-19 provision, though few students choose to combine courses with other institutions. There has been a significant increase in information and communication technology (ICT) resources in the last six years, with the addition of three ICT rooms in the technology building and four in the new 'Isca' building just opened, as well as an increase in other areas.

The school's priorities and targets

9. The school's mission statement is 'to maximise the potential of all in a happy, caring and disciplined environment'. Four main priorities have been identified in its school development/improvement plan for 2004-2007. These are:
 - raising standards of achievement;
 - curriculum development;
 - the deployment and continuous professional development of all staff; and
 - resources, accommodation and the site.

The targets for external examinations are as follows:

Key stage 3:

	2005	2006	2007
English attaining level 5 or above	85%	86%	84%
Mathematics attaining level 5 or above	86%	88%	85%
Science attaining level 5 or above	89%	89%	87%

Key stage 4

	2005	2006	2007
Pass rate A*-G	98%	99%	97%
Pass rate A*-C	75%	79%	73%
Pass rate Entry Level	100%	100%	100%
Pass rate 5 A*-G	94%	96%	94%
Pass rate A*-C	71%	75%	71%
Core Subject Indicator of pupils achieving at least grades C in English, mathematics and science in combination	56%	58%	53%

Summary

10. Caerleon Comprehensive School continues to be a very good school with many outstanding features.

Table of grades awarded

Key Question	Inspection grade
KQ1	1
KQ2	1
KQ3	1
KQ4	1
KQ5	1
KQ6	1
KQ7	1

11. This is an unusually high level of performance and consistency. The grades match those in the school's self-evaluation report.

12. As the school underwent a short inspection, there are no reports on individual subjects.

KEY STAGE 3 and KEY STAGE 4

Standards

13. The outstanding features are:

- the national test and public examination results;
- the very good progress which pupils of all abilities make; and
- pupils' motivation, behaviour and personal development.

14. Results in national tests at the end of key stage (KS) 3, have improved each year and are well above national averages. They place the school in the upper quartile compared to schools with a similar intake. In particular, boys' literacy skills are outstanding.

15. Results in the GCSE examinations are also well above national averages in all indicators. They have remained above average compared to those of schools with a similar intake and mostly place the school in the upper quartile. The percentage of grades A* and A is well above the national average. Only one pupil has left school without qualifications in the six years since the last inspection.
16. The most able, pupils of average to lower ability and pupils with SEN all make very good progress. Specific talents are encouraged; particular needs are identified and support is given, to good effect.
17. Pupils' key skills develop very well, particularly communication skills. Standards in ICT have improved considerably since the last inspection and the recent new facilities are already having further impact.
18. Pupils' personal development is also a high priority. They are well motivated, confident young people, aware of others and of the wider world. They behave very well and are polite and personable to visitors. They also realise the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. The annual attendance rate last year (93%) is better than in most comprehensive schools.

The quality of education and training

19. The outstanding features are:
 - the quality of teaching and formal assessment;
 - the curricular provision which meets learners' aspirations and prepares them for the future;
 - the range and quality of extra-curricular activities; and
 - the pastoral support and guidance for pupils, including those with SEN.
20. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
33%	56%	10%	1%	0%

21. These figures are well above the national targets for the quality of teaching to be grade 3 and above in 95% of lessons, and grades 1 and 2 in 50%. They are also above the figure of 75% of lessons judged grade 1 or 2, in inspections in Wales last year. In a third of lessons, there were outstanding features, a high proportion.
22. Teachers are well qualified and have high expectations of pupils. There are good working relationships and there is very effective behaviour management. Lessons are carefully planned, with good use of resources, including well-produced materials for homework and revision purposes.
23. Assessment is regular and accurate. Pupils know what to do to improve their work.
24. The curriculum meets learners' aspirations and is flexible in providing many opportunities for different abilities and interests. Particularly good features are the setting arrangements, the initiatives for literacy and numeracy and the early entry to GCSE.
25. The curriculum is extended by a vast programme of extra-curricular activities, in which a significant number of pupils gain national, and sometimes international, recognition, particularly in music, debating and sport. The number of visits abroad is notable. The school orchestra's success in bringing the School Proms 2003 to a finale at the Royal Albert Hall is also an outstanding achievement.

26. Long-standing and successful partnerships have been developed with local employers and providers, to extend pupils' knowledge of the world of work. Careers guidance and work-related activities are of high quality.
27. The school has a caring and inclusive ethos that effectively guides, supports and challenges learners. There is very good support for pupils with SEN, including those with disabilities. The close curricular and pastoral links with primary schools enable pupils to settle quickly. The more recent initiatives to extend the most able at KS3 augur well.
28. The personal and social education (PSE) programme and the good use of time with tutors support pupils' personal development well. Assemblies and the daily act of collective worship in tutor groups also contribute to pupils' understanding of and respect for others. Pupils show a mature understanding of a range of issues related to social and cultural diversity.

Leadership and management

29. The outstanding features are:
 - the vision and direction given by the headteacher, senior management team, governors and middle managers;
 - the corporate ethos of learning, discipline and high achievement, together with strong pastoral care;
 - the high standards of professionalism and effective links between all sections of the school and wider community;
 - the embedded culture of self-evaluation and the quest for continuous improvement; and
 - the effective use of all available resources – human, material and financial.
30. The headteacher gives dynamic leadership in strategic and financial planning, self-evaluation, empowering staff and maintaining high standards of work and behaviour amongst pupils. At the heart of his leadership is personal contact with and support for individuals.
31. He is very ably supported by a senior management team with the same values, members of which work closely with staff and pupils. They are effective both as a team and in their own specific areas of responsibility.
32. Governors have considerable expertise and experience and take a leading role in planning, monitoring and evaluation. They are highly supportive of the school.
33. The quality of middle management, both academic and pastoral, is very good and is unusually consistent.
34. There is a culture of reflection and there are thorough procedures to monitor performance. Priorities are identified and development planning has clear targets for improvement, at all levels of management and in all areas of the school.
35. Teaching and support staff are effectively deployed and continuous professional development enhances the contribution they make to the life and work of the school. The school holds the 'Investor in People' award.
36. Resources have increased since the last inspection, and are generally good. The two very attractive new buildings for design and technology, and for languages and ICT have eased pressure on accommodation. However, there are still areas where accommodation is inadequate in terms of quantity or quality, particularly science, music, physical education, and the canteen.

37. Careful financial planning and management have resulted in good levels of resourcing generally, and very good new provision. The school uses its available resources very effectively and gives very good value for money.

SIXTH FORM

38. The outstanding features highlighted in each section at KS3 and KS4 apply equally to the sixth form. They are evident in specific terms as follows:

Standards

39. Examination results are above national averages, with an increase in the percentage of top grades (A and B) each year recently. As nationally, girls have generally done better than boys.
40. Students have well-developed key skills in communication, numeracy and ICT. Since the last inspection they have gained accreditation in key skills in a variety of schemes. Currently, there is emphasis on everyone gaining level two in ICT and lessons are provided for students as appropriate.
41. Students make good progress during their time in the sixth form. The vast majority stay for two years and gain the qualifications to enable them to move onto the next stage. Motivation is high. Over 95% of students each year proceed to Higher or Further Education. Students recognise the need for good attendance and are punctual to school and to lessons.
42. Students are self-disciplined, mature young adults who are very personable to visitors. They speak readily of a range of interests and successes in extra-curricular activities as well as in their studies.

The quality of education and training

43. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed, a very small sample of 13 lessons, was judged as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
31%	69%	0%	0%	0%

44. Teachers' very good subject knowledge enables students to explore issues in depth. There is increased emphasis on encouraging independent learning as preparation for Higher Education and students regularly undertake research. Teachers regularly share objectives for learning, examination requirements and criteria for success with students.
45. The quality of assessment and monitoring is very good. Students receive feed-back on how to improve their work, are involved in self-assessment and set targets for future progress. Students having difficulties are identified at an early stage and support is given.
46. There is an appropriate range of courses, with added breadth achieved through key skills, PSE lessons and a vast range of extra-curricular activities.
47. The close links with local businesses and industry inform students' knowledge of the world of work. The Young Enterprise scheme, in Year 12, encourages team-building and communication skills.
48. Pastoral support and guidance enable students to make informed choices about their future and support their personal development. Visiting speakers and tutors raise awareness of various issues appropriate to students' ages, aspirations and interests.

Leadership and management

49. The sixth form is very well led and managed as a unit within the school as a whole. There is a good balance between providing a disciplined environment and allowing students a greater

measure of independence. Expectations are clear. Students speak of the strong corporate ethos within the sixth form and of its friendliness as a community.

50. There is a clear management structure and effective communication between the head of sixth form, sixth-form pastoral staff and subject teachers. Students' progress is kept under regular review. The link to senior management is also facilitated by the head of sixth form's membership of the senior management team.
51. Self-evaluation is very thorough and effective and the views of students are taken into account. Areas for development are identified and planned, with adequate resources provided.
52. The sixth-form building provides a teaching, learning and social base for students, though lessons are also taught in specialist areas throughout the school. Some of its rooms are small for the size of classes, and the common room is crowded. Nevertheless, the school uses what is available appropriately and has provided some ICT facilities in that building.
53. The whole-school resources for ICT in the newly opened building will increase access for students considerably. The careers library, near to the school library, is a good resource.

Progress since the last inspection

54. There has been good progress on ICT across the curriculum since the last inspection, though the most recently acquired facilities have only just become available. There has been considerable spending on resources, and planning for more consistent use of pupils' skills. The acquisition of interactive whiteboards is also impacting on teaching and learning styles.
55. The two new buildings represent very good progress in improving the accommodation, but there remain some areas of the school which need further improvement.
56. The format of reports has changed for the better, though not all comments or targets are specific enough yet in identifying strengths, weaknesses, and ways forward.
57. More time is allocated to religious education in the sixth form. The Welsh dimension is planned more effectively in schemes of work though it is not yet a strong feature in regular practice. The school has kept vocational qualifications under review and encouraged partnerships with providers. However, there has been little interest from pupils, and current provision is centred on GCSE and A level courses with a few exceptions.

Recommendations

- R1. Extend the outstanding features in teaching, learning and assessment even more widely across the school.
- R2. As funds become available, improve aspects of the accommodation.

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

Acknowledgement

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