

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

**CANTONIAN HIGH SCHOOL**

**Fairwater Road**

**Fairwater**

**Cardiff**

**School Number: 681/4049**

**Date of Inspection: 24 – 28 January 2005**

**by**

**Miss G Owen  
110 8205**

**Date: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2005**

**Under Estyn contract number: T/27/04**

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Cantonian High 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 Cantonian High School took place between 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2005. An independent team of 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:

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

## 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

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.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

A level	Advanced level
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEP	Individual Education Plan
IT	Information Technology
KS	Key Stage
NC	National Curriculum
PSE	Personal and Social Education
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SEN	Special Educational Needs
UA	Unitary Authority
Y	Year

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Cantonian High School is an 11-19, mixed community school serving Fairwater and Pentreban, in Cardiff Unitary Authority (UA). There are 1146 pupils on roll, including 134 in the sixth form. Numbers have been fairly constant over recent years but there is now a falling roll due to demographic changes. There are 50 fewer pupils than at the time of the last inspection.
2. Parts of the catchment area are economically disadvantaged and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals (25%) is well above the national average of 15.7%.
3. The school caters for the full range of ability. However, the large proportion of pupils is of average and lower ability and the small minority of higher ability, with few very able pupils. Six per cent of pupils have statements of special educational needs (SEN) and a further 16% have been identified on the SEN register as needing further support. There is a special unit for 11 pupils with severe learning difficulties on site.
4. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language and there is a small but growing number of pupils from ethnic minorities, of whom 41 receive teaching in English as an additional language.
5. The school has three main partner primary schools and is part of the Cardiff Collegium to extend curricular provision for pupils aged 14-19, working with three other providers to offer courses jointly.
6. The school is in a period of transition. The headteacher, two deputy heads and two of the four assistant heads have all been in post for less than two years, some considerably less. There is also a recently appointed Bursar and a Workload Manager, who work closely with the headteacher and senior management team.
7. The school was last inspected in March 1999.

### The school's priorities and targets

8. The school's aims and priorities are based on the mission statement: "The best from each, success for all." The aims have been translated into the school development plan, which has 14 priorities. These are comprehensive, relating to standards of achievement, the quality of education provided and leadership and management. Targets are set for a one-year and three-year period and numerical targets are also set for examination success.

## Summary

9. Cantonian High School is an improving school. The headteacher and senior management team have introduced a large number of initiatives, through the school development plan, to raise standards and improve the quality of education in the last eighteen months. As yet, these are not fully embedded across the school, and there is some way to go. However, there are signs of progress in a number of areas.

### Table of grades awarded

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

### Standards of Achievement

Standards in subjects inspected			
Subject	KS3	KS4	Sixth form
Science	3	3	2
Welsh second language	3	2	2
Design & Technology	3	3	3
History	2	2	2
Physical Education	2	1	2
Drama	3	2	2

## **KS3 and KS4**

### **Standards of Achievement**

10. The extent to which pupils make good progress varies between subjects and between classes. As indicated above, standards are good with no important shortcomings in history and physical education at key stage (KS) 3. In the other four subjects inspected, good features outweighed shortcomings. At KS4, standards improve. There are outstanding features in physical education, no important shortcomings in three subjects and some shortcomings in two subjects.

11. The following grades were awarded in the six subjects inspected:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	44%	40%	5%	0%

12. These grades are above current national targets of 50% of lessons to be graded 1 and 2 and 95% of lessons to be graded 1, 2 and 3.

13. However, there is scope for further improvement in the standards which pupils achieve. A significant minority of pupils do not show good attitudes to learning and a small minority of these pupils exhibit challenging behaviour, and do not show sufficient respect for others. Sometimes, this can adversely affect the learning of the group. Whilst this is more common in middle to lower ability sets, some pupils in top sets can also be disengaged.

14. Pupils generally make better progress in practical work and in short, focussed tasks, than in whole-class sessions. When pupils are actively engaged in their learning, they work with greater enthusiasm.

15. Pupils' key skills are not yet sufficiently developed to enable them to work to their full potential in all areas. Standards in speaking, reading, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) are higher than standards in listening and writing. Access to ICT resources, during the school day, is, however, limited in subjects other than information technology (IT).

16. Pupils with SEN receive good support in small groups and achieve well. Those who receive teaching in English as an additional language also make good progress.

17. Sporadic attendance adversely affects the progress of a significant minority of pupils. There is also a lack of urgency in arriving at school and at classes on time among a number of pupils.

18. There is an improving trend in examination results but results at the end of KS3 and KS4 have been below average for schools with a similar intake in recent years.

19. There are also signs of improvement in a number of subjects currently, though these have not yet been translated into examination success. When teaching is good or outstanding, pupils achieve well. Standards in physical education and history are particularly good.

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

20. In the six subjects inspected, the grades awarded for teaching were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
18%	46%	32%	4%	0%

21. These grades are also above current national targets.
22. There are many committed teachers who give generously of their time to help pupils outside lessons and to organise visits in the United Kingdom and abroad. There has been a considerable growth in the out-of-hours learning in the last few years, through CELTICA, the learning centre, and this is an outstanding feature of the school. The school has achieved national recognition for the quality of this provision.
23. There have been a number of long-term absences among the staff in recent years which have impacted upon continuity and progression in pupils' learning.
24. Although teachers have good subject knowledge, they do not always use this to engage and motivate learners in a wide range of learning experiences.
25. Teachers recognise the need to instil in pupils a positive attitude to work and most have good working relationships with pupils. However, an inconsistent approach to the application of new strategies such as 'discipline for learning' means that sanctions and praise are not applied effectively.
26. There is similar variation in the quality of assessment, and in the setting and marking of homework. The school has recently introduced new assessment and feedback procedures which include target-setting and the use of data to improve standards. This practice is, as yet, inconsistent.
27. Pastoral support to pupils is an outstanding feature of the school. There have been imaginative recent initiatives to support individuals in their academic progress as well as in their personal development. Some pupils in each year group are targeted to receive mentoring, sometimes with help from higher education students in Cardiff.
28. Very good links with primary schools ensure the smooth and effective transition from KS2 to KS3. Pupils also speak highly of the personal and social education programme, recently revised. Careers education prepares them well for the world of work.
29. There are other good curricular initiatives. All pupils at KS3 have taster courses in Spanish, German and Japanese, with a well-established exchange

scheme to a school in Japan. Drama is also taught to all at KS3. At KS4, there is a reasonable range of vocational courses as well as traditional General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses, and an alternative curriculum for those at risk of disengagement.

30. The provision for pupils with SEN has been re-organised and is now good, with some outstanding features in the support given to pupils with severe learning difficulties.

### **Leadership and management**

31. The vision and drive from the headteacher and senior management team have been instrumental in moving the school forwards thus far. They have clearly identified appropriate priorities for development and kept up the pace of change. There have been discernible improvements particularly in the role of middle managers, collaborative working with staff and imaginative use of support staff.
32. Continuing professional development has been at the heart of progress and there are good systems in place to support those new to teaching. The school has been recognised again as an 'Investor in People' this year, for the quality of its staff development.
33. Systematic procedures for monitoring performance have been established recently. Although self-evaluation informs planning for improvement, the effectiveness of these plans is constrained by variability in the extent to which these arrangements have become embedded in routines at departmental level and reflect whole-school aims.
34. Governors are strongly supportive of the school and endorse the way in which it is moving forward. However, they are not involved in acquiring first-hand evidence for themselves through monitoring procedures, and as such their role as 'critical friends' is not fully developed.
35. Whilst there is good practice in leadership and management among some departmental and pastoral teams, middle management is not consistently good. Best practice is not sufficiently shared to ensure that all pupils receive teaching and learning which meets their needs.
36. There also remains work to be done in involving all pupils in this ethos of learning, achievement and shared values as a community.
37. Improvements have been made to the accommodation after a critical report at the time of the last inspection. Interior accommodation is now good overall and provides well for learning. Nevertheless, there are some shortcomings in the outside fabric of one building, and in a few departments.

38. Cuts have had to be made to rectify a financial deficit and that has had some implications on resourcing. The school is now prioritising its spending efficiently after full and open debate. Available resources are generally used effectively.

### **SIXTH FORM**

39. There has been substantial change in the ethos of the sixth form this year, and initiatives have already impacted on students' learning and personal development, to a greater extent than at KS3 and KS4. Expectations are that they attend school throughout the day, experience a broad curriculum and take a leading role in the life and work of the school. The school aims to increase the staying-on rate from year (Y) 11, and an extension to the sixth form facilities is planned for summer 2005. The new head of sixth form, this academic year, has made a significant impact, supported by the school's senior management team.

### **Standards of Achievement**

40. In the six subjects inspected, standards were good with no important shortcomings in five subjects and, in the other, good features outweighed some shortcomings.

41. The grades awarded for a very small sample of lessons were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	64%	29%	0%	0%

42. There is a wide range of ability within the sixth form, including students with SEN. Students of differing abilities make good progress overall.
43. Their key skills improve in the sixth form. There is emphasis on the importance of good key skills and students are working towards compiling portfolios of best practice. They are generally articulate and use numeracy and ICT competently.
44. Personal and social skills also develop well. Students play an increasingly active part in helping younger pupils in lessons, in extra-curricular activities and in fund-raising initiatives. They take a leading role in the School Council and participate in a wide range of sixth-form activities.
45. The attendance, punctuality and attitudes of the large majority of students are improving, particularly in Y12, but this remains an area for on-going monitoring.
46. The retention rate during the sixth form and from Y12 to Y13 has been identified by the school as an area for improvement. Examination results have been representative of the full range of abilities and attitudes, below national averages but with small numbers, making comparisons difficult. Most students currently in the sixth form are well motivated to succeed and proceed to Higher Education.

## The quality of education and training

47. Grades awarded for teaching in the small sample of lessons seen in the sixth form were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	71%	22%	0%	0%

48. Sixth form lessons are characterised by positive relationships, good individual support and an appropriate level of challenge.
49. Teachers provide well-structured learning opportunities which are closely linked to examination requirements. Generally, teachers encourage independent thought, but sometimes rely too much on their own input and do not encourage students to develop their own opinions.
50. Most assessment is of high quality and provides targets for improvement, although some work is infrequently marked.
51. The sixth form curriculum provides a broad range of academic subjects, with an increasing number of vocational courses. Wherever possible, the school tries to accommodate students' preferences. At present, the need to offer a variety of courses at Advanced (A) 2 level, and very small numbers in groups, is a contributory factor to large classes at KS3 and KS4. The school recognises this and is working through the Cardiff collegium to offer joint courses with other schools and the college.
52. There is planned induction into the sixth form. Students' progress is then regularly monitored, with good advice on careers and applications to higher education.

## Leadership and management

53. The good management systems in the school as a whole are evident in the sixth form: good communication, collaboration, self-evaluation and planning for improvement. There is a regular cycle of meetings and consistency of approach between form tutors.
54. Evaluation of provision leads to effective planning for improvement and the school has identified appropriate priorities to raise standards, such as improving attendance and punctuality. Development of students' key skills is also appropriately identified for on-going progress.
55. Teaching and associate staff are effectively deployed. Access to ICT resources has been facilitated, but the current accommodation for sixth formers is not conducive to good independent learning or social exchange. The planned changes will make a considerable difference in the new academic year.

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

56. The school has been through considerable change since the last inspection at senior management level, with the retirement of the previous headteacher and acting headteacher, and changes in the senior management team. There has been some progress in terms of standards and examination results, in the achievement of boys and in pupils' written work. The senior management team is committed to school improvement and recognises there is further work to do. Personal and social education (PSE) has been successfully revised, aspects of the accommodation have received attention and a daily act of collective worship is carefully planned for assemblies and for tutor groups.
57. Target-setting for individual pupils and improvement in the overall attendance rate remain priorities.

### **Recommendations**

The school has a comprehensive school development plan. It should focus on the following, to consolidate progress and improve further:

- R1. Continue to improve standards and examination results.
- R2. Make more rigorous use of self-evaluation at middle management level, to plan for improvement.
- R3. Extend the range of teaching styles to engage pupils more actively in their own learning.
- R4. Promote the culture of learning and achievement being put in place, by consistent application of the discipline for learning policy.
- R5. Implement further the plans to develop pupils' key skills, particularly listening and writing.
- R6. Ensure that teachers use assessment and target-setting to support individual pupils in lessons in KS3 and KS4.
- R7. Improve attendance and punctuality.

## Standards

### Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?

#### Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

#### Pupils' success in attaining agreed learning goals

##### KS3 and KS4

59. At KS3, pupils achieve good standards with no important shortcomings in history and physical education. In science, Welsh second language, design and technology and drama, good features outweigh shortcomings.

60. At KS4, standards improve. Standards are good with outstanding features in physical education. In Welsh second language, history and drama, standards are good with no important shortcomings. In science and design and technology, good features outweigh shortcomings.

61. In lessons observed, the following grades were awarded:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	44%	40%	5%	0%

62. These grades are above current national targets for 50% of lessons to be graded 1 or 2, and 95% of lessons to be graded 3 or above.

63. There is, however, variation between classes in the standards which pupils achieve. Both the quality of teaching and pupils' attitudes to learning vary, and have a significant impact on standards achieved.

64. In general, the most able pupils and those with SEN make the most progress, though variation in the two above factors results in some inconsistencies. Pupils of average to lower ability make less consistent progress and the large size of many classes in Y8 and Y9 limits the amount of individual support that can be given. The school has recognised this and altered the organisation of Y7, a scheme which will move into Y8 next year.

65. At KS3 and KS4, pupils do not always have individual targets, apart from those with SEN and those on behaviour support programmes. Many pupils do not therefore experience the success of attaining their learning goals.

66. Standards in key skills are variable. As yet, there is insufficient emphasis on key skills across the curriculum, but there are appropriate plans, about to be implemented, to achieve consistency. Standards in numeracy, ICT, speaking and reading are generally better than standards in listening and writing. There

are, however, pockets of good practice in key skills, particularly in history and in the work of pupils with SEN.

67. The achievement of boys is lower than the achievement of girls, and this is closely linked to weaker literacy skills.
68. Pupils are generally keen to participate orally and the more able pupils use extended speech confidently. However, discussion is sometimes curtailed by some pupils' reluctance to listen to others. In a significant minority of classes, pupils do not listen respectfully.
69. Reading skills are of a higher standard and pupils identified as having reading difficulties are given appropriate support. Reading ages improve significantly. There is a good borrowing rate from the library and, especially at KS4, pupils are encouraged to undertake research.
70. Whilst the written work of the more able is technically accurate, that of a significant number of pupils of average to lower ability is marred by inaccuracies in spelling and grammar. The initiatives to help the writing of pupils with SEN are proving effective.
71. Pupils use numbers competently in subjects across the curriculum, and are confident in applying basic skills in number to a variety of situations.
72. Pupils have good ICT skills, through discrete lessons throughout KS3. They are able to use these skills in various contexts but access to computers in other subjects is difficult. In out-of-hours learning, pupils achieve well, and a large number of pupils choose to take ICT courses at KS4, with success.
73. The large majority of pupils work together well in groups and, when there are opportunities, collaborate to solve problems. When feedback on their work is detailed, they respond appropriately in trying to improve their performance.
74. Pupils gain in confidence in Welsh as they progress through the school. They take part with enthusiasm in the annual Eisteddfod and some pupils attend Welsh language residential centres.
75. Those who learn English as an additional language are well motivated and make good progress.
76. Results in the national curriculum (NC) tests at the end of KS3 have improved in each of recent years. In 2004, 46.5% of pupils reached level 5 in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science combined. However, this is below the national average and below average for schools nationally which have a similar intake. There was no significant difference in performance between the subjects, relative to schools with a similar intake.
77. At KS4, results have also improved. In 2004, 35% of pupils gained at least five grades A\*-C at GCSE, compared to 29% at the time of the last inspection. However, results are well below the national average and below that of schools

nationally with a similar intake. The proportion gaining at least five grades A\*-G, and the proportion gaining a grade A\*-C in the three core subjects combined, are in the lowest quartile, by comparison to schools nationally with a similar intake.

### Sixth form

78. Standards improve in the sixth form. There is a wide spread of ability, including students with SEN. All those who will benefit from one or two year courses are encouraged to return. As yet, neither the return rate nor the retention rate are as high as the school would like, but radical changes in the last academic year are already positively impacting on standards.
79. In the six subjects inspected, standards were good with no important shortcomings in five subjects, and good features outweighed shortcomings in one.
80. The grades awarded, in a small sample of lessons, were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	64%	29%	0%	0%

81. Students have targets and work towards achieving these. Their progress is regularly monitored and action promptly taken to eliminate any shortcomings.
82. Key skills improve in the sixth form. Emphasis on key skills has been evident for a number of years, with some students successful in gaining qualifications in 2001. Currently, students are compiling portfolios of evidence.
83. Students are articulate and generally have good writing skills. They apply numbers easily in a range of subjects and use ICT competently. They engage in research with increasing independence and in most lessons they gain confidence in expressing their own opinions.
84. There is a small number of students from other countries on a one-year programme. They have adapted very well, are making good progress both in English and in their subjects, and are contributing much to the sixth form ambience.
85. Numbers have been small and comparisons of examination results with national averages are therefore difficult. The average points score in 2004 of 16 was below the national average of 20, but with a wide spread of ability. Across the range of subjects, there is evidence of value added from GCSE in the large majority of subjects.

## **Progress in learning**

### **KS3 and KS4**

86. Pupils' rate of progress is variable between subjects and between classes. However, they make better progress in practical work and in short, focused tasks than in whole-class sessions. Many have short attention spans and work with greater enthusiasm when they are actively engaged in their learning.
87. Pupils with SEN make the most progress as they have clear targets, know how well they are doing and feel a sense of achievement. Whilst pupils of other abilities, particularly the most able, also make good progress in a number of subjects and classes, they do not have targets in all subjects, and are not always sure how well they are doing.
88. The groups of pupils who have been targeted for mentoring receive good support, but at present the majority of pupils in each year group do not receive regular monitoring of their academic progress.

### **Sixth form**

89. The new systems this year have had an immediate impact on students' progress. They have individual targets which are regularly reviewed and students are articulate about their progress. They know how well they are doing and what they need to do to succeed.
90. Students respond well to the challenge of independent learning and gain in motivation. They are increasingly confident about expressing their own ideas and confident in their aspirations for the future.

## **The development of pupils' personal, social and learning skills**

### **KS3 and KS4**

91. The large majority of pupils are motivated and behave appropriately. However, they can, at times, be influenced by a significant minority of pupils who are not well motivated. Within this group is a small minority of pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour and show lack of respect to teachers, other pupils and to visitors.
92. The behaviour of the whole class adversely affects learning in some classes and subjects. This is more common in middle to lower ability sets but can occur in top sets. Some teachers deal very effectively with behaviour, even very challenging behaviour, but not all. Pupils behave particularly well in physical education.
93. Attendance and punctuality are among the school's priorities for improvement. Attendance last year, at 87%, was below the national benchmark of 90%. Sporadic attendance adversely affects the progress of a significant minority of pupils.

94. There is some lack of rigour in attending school and lessons on time by a small minority of pupils.
95. The out-of-hours learning in the learning centre is an outstanding feature of the school and encourages pupils to develop skills for lifelong learning. The good provision of ICT resources in the centre enables pupils to work independently.
96. There are many activities which support pupils' personal development, including planned weekly themes for reflection in assemblies and tutor groups, extra-curricular experiences, fund-raising activities, the school council and many others. Not all pupils respond positively to the opportunities available, but the large majority makes good progress.
97. The school also provides many opportunities to encourage pupils' understanding of equal opportunity and racial diversity. Again, most pupils respond well.

### **Sixth form**

98. Sixth-form students work with greater motivation. There is a strong corporate culture within the sixth form, which students find supportive. They mature as individuals and engage easily with visitors.
99. Attendance and punctuality are on-going areas for improvement. Attendance this year has improved, particularly in Y12, with increased expectations of attendance. However, there are still students whose attendance and punctuality cause concern.
100. The emphasis on being in school throughout the day and contributing to the life and work of the school has resulted in students taking a leading role in many events. Students become increasingly responsible, helping in lessons and extra-curricular activities, and performing well in work experience placements.
101. They also become more confident in independent learning, using computers competently for research and for presentations. Many have increasing aspirations for themselves.
102. The inclusion of students from other countries and the regular exchange with a school in Japan have broadened horizons. The sixth form is a friendly and welcoming community.

## The quality of education and training

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

#### Grade 3 : Good features outweigh shortcomings.

103. This grade is a grade lower than the school's self-evaluation grade.
104. The school has identified in its self-evaluation report that there is increasing consistency in assessment practices. The evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that there is still significant inconsistency in practice which impacts on standards. In addition the self-evaluation report indicates that the annual analysis of whole-school performance ensures that teaching is evaluated. In practice this lacks rigour and consistency across departments.

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

#### KS3 and KS4

105. In the six subjects inspected teaching was at least good with no important shortcomings in 64% of lessons. Teaching in 4% of lessons had shortcomings in important areas. These grades are above current national targets.

Grade 1	Grade2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
18%	46%	32%	4%	0%

106. Lessons in other subjects were also observed. Overall good features in teaching outweigh shortcomings. There have been a number of long-term absences among the staff recently, which have impacted adversely upon continuity and progression in pupils' learning.
107. There are many committed teachers who give generously of their time to help pupils. Teachers are caring, supportive and most have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, some teachers do not sufficiently engage and challenge pupils and a significant minority of pupils are not motivated by lessons.
108. Some teachers continually challenge pupils and use a range of strategies to convey information and interest pupils. In these cases lessons are conducted with pace and teachers ensure that all pupils are focused on activities which are well matched to their age and ability.
109. Most teachers have good working relationships with pupils and have a clear understanding of their pupils' needs.
110. A discipline for learning policy has recently been introduced. Some teachers use the strategies suggested in the policy effectively to encourage high

standards of behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. However sanctions and rewards are not applied consistently by all teachers.

111. Teachers have good subject knowledge and many are using professional development opportunities to ensure that they are familiar with new concepts and developments in their subject area. They plan and deliver lessons which meet the requirements of the NC and external examination bodies.
112. Some teachers use their subject knowledge very effectively to plan interesting and varied tasks for pupils but not all teachers engage learners in a wide range of learning experiences. Instead they rely too heavily on their own input.
113. Most teachers have clear outcomes for pupils but these are not always based on their knowledge of pupils' prior experience and achievement. In this sense, learning is not always structured to provide the most appropriate opportunities for pupils.
114. Almost all teachers share learning outcomes with pupils at the start of lessons and some recap on learning at the end of lessons. However, this practice is inconsistent and insufficient emphasis is placed on asking pupils to reflect on their own learning.
115. Most work is pitched at an appropriate level to ensure that pupils experience success. In some subjects, resources are well produced and relevant, and engage pupils of all abilities. However, at times, teachers are over-reliant on worksheets. These are not always well used and fail to challenge pupils.
116. Support staff are well integrated into lessons and work closely with classroom teachers to ensure that the needs of individual pupils are met.
117. Homework is not always regularly set and marked. Pupils' diaries are not well used to help pupils organise homework tasks.
118. The good teaching and support of pupils with English as an additional language are strong features of the school. Pupils are made aware of the benefits of bilingualism.
119. Pupils with SEN receive suitably challenging work which is well suited to their needs. They are given good opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and understand what they need to do to make progress.

### **Sixth Form**

120. Teaching was at least good with no important shortcomings in 78% of the small sample of lessons in the six subjects inspected. Good features outweighed shortcomings in the remainder of lessons inspected.

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	71%	22%	0%	0%

121. Teachers challenge and stimulate students to achieve high standards. They encourage students to approach learning in an organised and focused way which results in high expectations from both teachers and students.
122. Students are well supported in lessons. Teachers are aware of differing abilities within classes and deal with individual students in a sensitive and appropriate way.
123. There is a good atmosphere in lessons. Students are treated maturely and they respect their teachers.
124. Teachers provide well-structured opportunities for students to develop as independent learners. However, some teachers rely too much on their own input and do not encourage students to develop their own opinions.
125. Most teachers make good use of available resources and facilities to provide stimulating opportunities for learning. These include the use of video, PowerPoint, interactive whiteboard and use of the internet.
126. Teachers have high expectations of sixth-form students in relation to self-discipline and commitment. The new initiatives regarding attendance are helpful in supporting individual teachers in ensuring that students are fully committed to their studies.
127. Teachers of sixth-form students have good subject knowledge. They use this well to guide and challenge students as well as encouraging students to deepen their knowledge of particular aspects of their work. Many teachers ask searching questions and frequently require students to probe and develop responses.
128. Some teachers make good use of their own experience to enhance students' knowledge and to make their teaching relevant and comprehensible.
129. Planning is closely related to examination specifications. Objectives are usually shared with students so that they are aware of the requirements of examination work. In the best practice, the criteria for individual coursework tasks are explained in terms of what students have to do to gain marks.

### **The rigour of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning**

#### **KS3 and KS4**

130. The quality of assessment practice across the school is inconsistent. Most teachers mark work regularly, using detailed marking schemes and paying attention to the school guidance on marking. However, a small proportion of work is infrequently marked or marked in a superficial way which does not help pupils make progress.

131. The school has recently introduced new assessment and feedback procedures which include target-setting and the use of data to improve standards. In many cases these are well used to help inform planning and set targets for individual pupils. Some teachers, however, pay insufficient attention to this process and the practice is, as yet, inconsistent.
132. Many teachers use marking as a way of communicating short-term targets to pupils on a day-to-day basis. Some of these targets are useful and are designed to help pupils make progress in relation to subject-specific skills, whereas other targets are very general and related to the completion or presentation of work. Not all teachers follow this practice consistently.
133. Some departments have developed ways of rewarding good work which focus on celebrating pupils' achievement. Along with positive comments these strategies are helping pupils recognise features of good work.
134. Some departments have begun to encourage pupils to evaluate their own work and set their own targets with the support of the teacher. Where pupils are encouraged to engage regularly in this process, they demonstrate a good understanding of what they need to do to make progress. However, despite pupils engaging in self-evaluation in progress files, this practice is not sufficiently embedded throughout the school.
135. Annual reports are generated electronically from subject comment banks. This has presented problems relating to the quality of information provided for parents.
136. The school has addressed the concerns raised at the end of the last academic year and, although current reports continue to be based on comment banks, the school has developed a format that allows form tutors to comment freely on progress and achievement. There is no place for pupils or parents to comment on progress.
137. All reports contain subject-specific targets and general targets which are related to areas which have been identified by the school for improvement, such as literacy and presentation.
138. Formal interim reports are provided for KS3 pupils. These comment briefly on progress and effort. In addition these reports provide useful information on attendance and identify the number of teaching hours missed due to absence.

### **Sixth Form**

139. Assessment is usually of a high quality although a small minority of work is infrequently marked. Comments by teachers usually indicate how students can make progress but there is an inconsistency in the extent to which these comments provide students with subject-specific advice. Some comments are imprecise and focus on effort and presentation.

140. Most teachers provide clear targets for improvement which are carefully and regularly monitored.
141. Good use is made of ALIS data to set individual targets. Progress against these targets is carefully monitored and recorded in Progress Records.
142. Self-assessment is, as yet, underdeveloped. Some teachers encourage students to assess their own progress on a regular basis although this is not common across sixth-form subjects.
143. Teachers use assessment information well to help them plan future activities which meet the needs of students. They reflect carefully on the extent to which students are making progress in relation to examination requirements.
144. Reports to parents are provided annually. They contain useful information about students' progress and target grades. Teachers are able to comment freely on students' development and achievement. Many reports provide focused targets for improvement, but, as with day-to-day marking, sometimes these are too general.

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

<b>Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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145. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

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

146. Overall, the school provides appropriate learning experiences for pupils at KS3 and KS4. The curriculum is accessible for all pupils including those with SEN. At KS4, opportunities are provided for pupils to gain qualifications appropriate to their abilities and interests.
147. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides effective continuity between key stages. Generally it is flexible enough to meet the needs of pupils and students. There are, however, some large classes in many subjects in Y8 and in Y9 largely as a consequence of the current arrangements for the grouping of pupils. The school is well aware of this, and has changed the pattern in Y7, which will be extended next year.
148. There are some notable features in the learning experiences provided for pupils at KS3. All pupils have taster courses in Spanish, German and Japanese. Drama is also taught across the key stage. At KS4, pupils have the opportunity to choose from a reasonable range of vocational courses and a small number of them follow an alternative curriculum that assists their inclusion in the school.

149. Access to the sixth form is open to any student who would benefit from one or two year courses. Students can choose from a broad range of academic subjects and some vocational courses. Wherever possible, the school tries to accommodate students' preferences and is planning to extend provision through partnerships with other schools and colleges. Currently there are very small numbers in many subject groups in Y13 and this is a contributory factor to large class sizes at KS3 and KS4.
150. The school has a key skills co-ordinator who is supported well by other co-ordinators in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Policies for all key skills are in place but they are not embedded in practice across all the subjects of the curriculum. In the sixth form, students are provided with good opportunities to develop their personal and key skills.
151. Pupils and students participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and this is a strong feature of the school. There is a well-established exchange scheme with a school in Japan. Visits to other countries, school productions, various sporting events and other activities feature prominently in the overall life of the school.
152. The school is successful in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
153. Pupils' spiritual development is enriched throughout the school. A well-structured and highly appropriate programme of themes provides the focus for assemblies and form tutor sessions in each year group. The programme ensures that pupils and students are able to reflect on their own lives and beliefs, and on wider national and global issues.
154. Many pupils and students are involved in fund-raising activities and charity events. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme nurtures pupils and students in their social development and some pupils benefit greatly from this experience. Visits to other countries, theatres and museums enrich pupils' cultural development.
155. Links with parents are good. Regular newsletters provide parents with a good source of information relating to school life. The small but active Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) supports the school in fund-raising events. Attendance at parents' meetings is good in all year groups.
156. The curriculum overall meets legal requirements in all key stages. The provision for personal, health and social education, work-related education and careers education and guidance is planned well and follows national guidelines.

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

157. There is a good range of work-related activities provided for pupils in all key stages. The careers co-ordinator works closely with Careers Wales and

employers to ensure that the programme offered meets pupils' needs and interests. All pupils in Y10 and students in Y12 undertake work-experience placements and these are generally monitored well. Work-related activities form an integral part of the alternative curriculum.

158. Overall the school is successful in developing pupils' bilingual skills and in meeting the requirements for Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig. Welsh as a second language, either as a full or short course, is taught to all pupils at KS4. Pupils experience Welsh culture in many subjects and also through activities organised by the Welsh department. The School Eisteddfod is an important event in the school year and is well supported by pupils.
159. The arrangements for promoting equality of access to the curriculum are generally effective in all key stages. Pupils and students of all abilities are encouraged to achieve success both in their academic development and in their personal skills.
160. Issues relating to sustainable development and global citizenship are included within some subjects and the school encourages recycling. Currently, however, pupils' awareness and understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship are occasionally insecure.
161. Overall the school is well informed about the needs of employers. Visits to the school by many outside speakers broaden and strengthen pupils' understanding of the workplace. These are supplemented well through quality inputs from Careers Wales. Beneficial contacts with local employers have been established by the work- experience co-ordinator.
162. The careers programme provides pupils and students with good opportunities to develop their entrepreneurial skills. These are well nurtured through activities such as School Industry Days at all key stages and the Dynamo project at KS4. Opportunities for developing pupils' problem-solving skills, particular at KS3, are underdeveloped in some subjects.
163. The out-of-hours learning experiences provided by the school encourage pupils to acquire skills for lifelong learning.

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

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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164. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

#### **The quality of care, support and guidance**

165. The school provides a high level of support for its pupils. Relationships between pupils and staff are good and pupils consider the staff to be supportive and approachable. The school works closely and effectively with educational welfare officers and with external support services.

166. Pupils receive good advice at the end of Y9 concerning subject choices. Parents are kept fully informed and attend discussion meetings with staff at school. Careers education and related topics in the PSE programme also help pupils to make informed choices.
167. Very good arrangements and a very well-planned transition programme help new pupils settle quickly in Y7. The Head of Y7 and an assistant headteacher with special responsibilities for KS2/3 transition visit the partner primary schools and establish positive links with the new cohort of pupils, their parents and carers. New pupils visit the school during the summer term and pupils are further invited to participate in a summer transition programme during the first week of the summer term. Members of staff give enthusiastic support to this programme.
168. The school provides good pastoral support. Form tutors and heads of year know pupils well, although the monitoring of pupils' academic progress is less well developed.
169. The breakfast club is an outstanding feature of provision. Sixth-form students help staff in delivering a number of literacy initiatives.
170. Another new and outstanding initiative introduced during the current academic year involves pupil achievement mentors. They are proving successful in improving the standard of work and attendance record of a small percentage of identified pupils in each year group. Specific, individual targets are set for each pupil. Pupil achievement mentors are committed and have positive working relationships with pupils.
171. Many good initiatives to promote out-of-hours learning have been introduced under the umbrella of CELTICA, the learning centre. This provision has been recognised nationally, in the receipt of an award for Quality in Study Support, at established level. Pupils develop their study skills in lunchtime and after-school activities and they are also able to complete homework tasks. A good proportion of Y11 pupils attend out-of-hours learning sessions, some of which take place on Saturday mornings. Many members of staff give freely of their time to support this initiative. The out-of-hours learning programme, with its diverse and numerous activities, is popular with pupils and is another outstanding feature of the school.
172. The school's PSE programme has been revised and is delivered by form tutors in timetabled sessions. The programme is well planned, its content is detailed and it covers a wide range of topics relevant to each year group. The programme is carefully monitored. The school together with the careers service provides good careers education and all pupils in Y10 attend a two-week work experience placement. Pupils also participate in entrepreneurial activities.
173. Good strategies are in place to monitor attendance and punctuality. Registers are carefully kept and checked. The school has good links with the Education

Welfare Officer (EWO). Prompt action is taken when there is cause for concern.

174. A discipline for learning policy is in place and outlines clearly procedures in dealing with pupils with behaviour problems. However, as yet, it is not consistently implemented.
175. The school has effective health and safety procedures. It also has a detailed child protection policy. A named member of the senior staff takes responsibilities for this and all members of staff are kept very well informed of procedures and responsibilities.

### **The quality of provision for additional learning needs**

176. The school provides well for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs, including pupils with severe learning difficulties.
177. The policy for the identification, assessment and provision for pupils with SEN is comprehensive and developed to reflect the recommendations of the Code of Practice Wales 2002.
178. Information on pupils when they enter school, through close liaison with partner primary schools, is purposefully used to identify pupils' needs. Additionally pupils are screened in Y7 using an appropriate range of tests and this information is used well for allocating SEN support.
179. Pupils on school action and school action plus of the SEN Register and pupils with statements of SEN are supported by individual education plans (IEPs). These short-term targets for improving learning and behaviour are regularly reviewed and give teachers valuable information about the specific nature of each child's difficulty.
180. Statutory requirements for provision outlined in pupils' statements of SEN are met well. Statements are up-to-date and identified actions fully implemented. Additional staffing is used appropriately and effectively.
181. Parents of pupils with SEN are fully involved in reviews and give good support for their children's education. They are promptly informed of their child's identified needs and progress. The provision of SEN is seen as a strength of the school by parents.
182. Subject departments are responsible for providing work of appropriate standard for pupils with SEN within their curricular area. The quality varies from subject to subject but generally it is good.
183. Teaching support in the KS3 and KS4 special classes and for pupils with severe learning difficulties is very good and there is a high level of special expertise. The ethos of these classes is purposeful and supportive. Pupils are clear about the progress they are making and are actively involved in

evaluating and setting their targets. This helps promote their self-esteem and enables them to cope well in mainstream activities.

184. Effective use is made of additional support and guidance from the SEN adviser, pupil support service teachers and a range of external agencies.
185. Valuable additional support such as circle time and anger management sessions is provided for pupils with behavioural and social difficulties. The school makes a concerted effort to minimize disruption to the learning of others, by pupils with significant behavioural difficulties.
186. Any disabled pupil would not be able to access all areas of the school to follow the mainstream curriculum, without timetable changes, at present. There are disabled toilet facilities and a ramp leading into one of the teaching blocks. The school recognises the need to pay due regard to access for disabled pupils.

### **The quality of provision for equal opportunities**

187. Very good provision is provided for pupils with little or no knowledge of English. They are well supported and receive additional language tuition lessons. The school has a coherent race equality policy and issues of race and discrimination are discussed in morning assemblies, in religious education and in the PSE programme. There is a named member of staff with responsibilities for this area.
188. A clear equal opportunities policy has been implemented and both genders have access to all areas of the curriculum and other school activities. The performance of boys and girls in examinations is monitored.
189. The school tackles incidents of bullying which are reported. The anti-bullying policy has been revised and there are systems in place to deal with incidents. Pupils interviewed felt that members of staff take appropriate action when bullying is reported.
190. The school recognises and respects diversity. In lessons and assemblies pupils learn about different cultures and are encouraged to understand and respect these.

## **Leadership and management**

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

#### **Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

191. This is a grade lower than the school's self-evaluation, as inspectors felt that the good management initiatives are not yet consistently embedded in practice.

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

192. The headteacher and senior management team have vision and a clear sense of the direction in which the school should move forward. They have identified appropriate priorities and set themselves a comprehensive agenda for school improvement.
193. These priorities are grounded in equality for all and, accordingly, the provision for pupils with SEN has already been re-organised. Curricular planning in Y7 has also been adapted, with a commitment to extending this throughout KS3 and KS4.
194. Staff have been consulted and involved in planning for change. The 'leading teams', staff working parties, have taken management decisions on specific initiatives. The priorities identified by middle management have been acknowledged as whole-school priorities and incorporated into the agenda for school improvement.
195. Continuing professional development of individuals and teams of staff has been at the heart of progress. There are also good systems in place to support those new to teaching and those who have recently been appointed.
196. Progress on the school development plan has been reviewed at monthly intervals in order to keep up the pace of change. Senior management has set itself a challenging agenda and much has already been accomplished, especially in terms of whole-school policies and planning. There are also pockets of good and very good practice. The sixth form, and provision for pupils with SEN, in particular, have improved greatly in a very short space of time.
197. As yet, not all policies are implemented consistently. In particular, the discipline for learning and the assessment for learning policies are not applied effectively across the curriculum. There is marked variation in the standards achieved and attitudes of pupils in different classes. A significant minority of pupils do not yet subscribe to the school's aims and values.
198. The role of middle managers has been developed but there is still variation in the quality of leadership at this level, particularly in terms of promoting and sharing best practice in teaching and learning.
199. The school incorporates several national priorities into its agenda for improvement. The links with primary schools are very good and provide well for continuity of learning. There is currently planning within the Cardiff Collegium to extend the range of courses which can be offered from 14-19. Personal, social and work-related education are well planned and delivered and plans to improve pupils' key skills are about to be implemented.
200. There has been innovative management in appointing a workload manager and a bursar, both previously connected to the school. These appointments

have both improved provision in those areas and improved the focus of senior managers in relation to teaching and learning.

### **How well governors or other supervisory bodies meet their responsibilities**

201. The governing body includes members who have supported the school over a number of years, and members recently appointed. They have confidence in the senior management team and are strongly supportive of the school.
202. They are regularly provided with appropriate information by senior management and discuss emerging issues. They also endorse the direction in which the school is moving forward.
203. However, governors are not actively involved in seeking first-hand evidence for themselves. They do not have monitoring systems which would usefully expand their role as 'critical friends'. Nor are they able to prioritise areas in strategic management from first-hand knowledge.
204. Legal and course requirements are met.

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

<b>Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
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205. The school gave itself grade 2 in its self-evaluation report. The inspection team found that although good self-evaluation arrangements have been introduced and used, there are inconsistencies in the extent to which they have enabled quality and standards to improve.
206. Senior managers and many middle managers are well informed about performance in the areas for which they are responsible. A significant minority of middle managers, however, are less well informed about the quality of provision in their subject departments.
207. Where self-evaluation is good it draws on first-hand evidence from a range of sources. These include the analysis of examination results, scrutiny of pupils' and students' work and observations of lessons. A cycle of reviews of subject departments by senior managers has been started successfully with positive outcomes. This process is at an early stage of development and this has constrained its impact.
208. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation introduced by senior managers are designed to involve all staff at all levels. These arrangements are on-going and increasingly effective. There is much good practice across the curriculum, particularly in the review and analysis of examination results. The monitoring of teaching and learning is less well established in some subject departments.

209. Self-evaluation procedures have been introduced relatively recently. Their recent introduction has limited the extent to which they have helped to identify trends over periods of time and the underlying reasons behind them.
210. Leaders and managers attach importance to the views held by pupils and students. They have set up a school council, with elected representatives from each year group, to enable these views to be expressed. Pupils and students have responded with enthusiasm. Their views are noted by leaders and managers, but they do not yet contribute fully to issues about teaching and learning.
211. The introduction of 'Leading Teams', in which members of staff voluntarily meet to discuss and review policies and practice in specific areas of interest, has enhanced the contribution made by staff to self-evaluation. The views of other interested parties including employers, governors and community groups are also sought and considered.
212. Middle managers have begun to play their part in the self-evaluation process. Successful and effective practice is demonstrated in the pastoral system and in many subject departments. In a minority of subject departments the scope of self-evaluation and the consequent impact on performance is more limited.

### **The effectiveness of planning for improvement**

213. In many cases, at whole-school and departmental levels, leaders and managers make good use of information to produce effective plans for future developments. In a minority of cases, departmental developmental plans are not detailed enough and do not identify sufficient strategies to bring about desirable improvements. As yet, departmental plans do not show how whole-school aims will be delivered.
214. The school is in the process of setting priorities and appropriately challenging targets for improving standards achieved by pupils. At present, however, many pupils do not have a clear understanding about their targets for improvement. In some other cases pupils know their targets but these are insufficiently challenging. Some targets are more concerned with effort than aspects specific to particular subjects.
215. Plans for improvement identify resources needed to meet objectives. The provision of resources has been restricted by recent financial difficulties and by a lack of detailed costings in some development plans. Nevertheless, progress has been made recently in linking projected expenditure to the priorities identified in plans.
216. Strategic planning increasingly includes references to realistic and specific timescales. Recent records indicate a good measure of success in meeting targets within the prescribed deadlines.
217. Actions taken as a result of self-evaluation and planning have started to have a positive impact on the quality of performance. At present, although there is little

evidence of these procedures having a significant impact on pupils' and students' attainment, indications suggest that these measures are beginning to influence attitudes and achievement.

218. Some actions have led to discernible improvements. These include the introduction of an integrated science course in Y7, following a departmental review, and improvements to the continuing professional development of staff. A number of members of staff have benefited from in-service training and participation in projects supported by the General Teaching Council for Wales.
219. Evaluation of provision for sixth-form students has led to effective planning for improvement. Appropriate priorities have been identified to raise standards, such as improving attendance and punctuality. The development of students' key skills is also appropriately identified for on-going progress.

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

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

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

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

221. The staff is well qualified and has sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the curriculum. The level of staffing allows the curriculum to be delivered to all pupils and students. Several long-term staff absences in recent years have adversely affected continuity and progression.
222. Learning support assistants often take an active part in lessons and help plan and monitor pupils' progress. There is good access to professional advice and specialist support services.
223. There is an appropriate number of administrative and other support staff for the school to function effectively on a daily basis. The duties of all associate staff are well-defined so there is very little duplication of work across the school. Technical support for design and technology is limited at present but an increase is planned for the near future.
224. The level of provision and deployment of computers and electronic white boards within subject areas is very limited. Where they are available they are generally used well to support pupils' and students' learning. Up-to-date specialist equipment for various aspects of design and technology is limited.
225. There are a few rooms, including CELTICA and the library, which contain sufficient computers for whole classes. These facilities are used well for lessons in information technology and design and technology, and by a few other subjects, but, because they are used routinely by these subjects, they are not

always easily accessible through the booking system to others. Individual pupils and students make good use of these facilities at lunchtime and some after school.

226. The condition of books used across the curriculum is generally good. However, pupils do not generally have access to these books at home. The library is building up its supply of new books as funding becomes available. It is a little under-resourced and rather small for a school of this size.
227. The school makes effective use of a good range of resources beyond the school and addresses well a wide range of pupils' and students' needs. Trips abroad, visits to museums, galleries and field centres, for example, enhance pupils' and students' learning and achievement.
228. The overall quality of the interior accommodation is good and it is being continually improved. In most respects it provides a stimulating learning environment and is enhanced by good quality display work. Most specialist rooms are housed close to one another making sharing of resources easier. This is not the case for science, design and technology or physical education.
229. There are enough rooms for the pupils and students on roll and for the curriculum provided. Nevertheless, a few rooms are small for the size of the class. Facilities within the SEN department are cramped and a few other rooms, for example in drama, music and design and technology, become either very cold or too hot and can be uncomfortable to work in.
230. Various plans to enhance the accommodation for students in the sixth form are advancing well and will make a considerable difference in the new academic year. Currently sixth-form accommodation is not conducive to good independent learning or social exchange.
231. A programme to refurbish and develop various parts of the school buildings is on-going. The school is fully aware of shortcomings, particularly the exterior of one building, facilities for drama, and the canteen. Good quality additions, such as CELTICA, have already come to fruition. Very little graffiti or litter are in evidence either inside or outside of buildings. The interior of buildings is kept clean and tidy.
232. All buildings and rooms are accessible to all pupils and students currently. There are, however, no lifts in the buildings and wheel-chair access is limited to the hall, CELTICA and the canteen.
233. The school buildings and grounds are used effectively. A few facilities, mostly for sporting purposes, are let out for use by the community. The site, including playing fields, is kept in good order.

**How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money.**

234. The headteacher, in full and open discussion with the senior management team, bursar and governing body, manages the budget effectively. The school has recently made various cuts in order to rectify a significant financial deficit. Difficult decisions have been made in resourcing in order to balance the budget.
235. Audits of the accounts have shown systems to be good. The accounting system allows the school to monitor and account well for its overall spending. There is very limited contingency money available at present but the school is prioritising its spending efficiently. Systems to analyse and review the use of central resources are good. They test out, and ensure, value for money.
236. Subject departments are generally run effectively. Not all, however, ensure efficiency in spending the yearly allowance, or in keeping to it. Middle managers are not sufficiently familiar with the school's process for requesting extra funds through a project proposal.
237. The school knows well the costs of major developments that are being planned and those that are on-going. Debate and decisions about spending are linked well to the school's objectives and prioritise the effect it will have upon standards and quality of education. Provision of resources for pupils and students is reviewed regularly.
238. Staff are deployed well so that their expertise is put to best use. Managers are aware of the strengths and areas for development of staff. There are highly effective procedures for teachers' professional updating and induction and for supporting new staff and newly qualified teachers. Several teachers have taken advantage of funding from the General Teaching Council for Wales in order to support their continued development.
239. The financial implications of, for example, the projected number of pupils and students on roll and subsequent room usage and staffing, are reviewed appropriately. Overall, leaders and managers are using resources efficiently. Provision is increasingly helping pupils and students from a variety of academic and social backgrounds to reach their potential.

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

### **Subject 1 Science**

#### **Key Stage 3- Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

##### **Good features**

- 240. Pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. Many are able to recall previous work and use it to explain unfamiliar, but related events.
- 241. Most pupils can use scientific terms accurately, both orally and in writing, when explaining scientific concepts.
- 242. Pupils achieve appropriate levels in presenting their findings in both written and graphical form.
- 243. Pupils with SEN make particularly good progress.
- 244. At the start of the key stage, pupils carry out practical work purposefully. They work co-operatively and safely in carrying out experiments. They can make systematic observations and measurements.

##### **Shortcomings**

- 245. In some classes a significant number of pupils do not show sufficient respect for each other and their teacher, resulting in the underachievement of the group.
- 246. A significant number of pupils have sporadic attendance, resulting in gaps in their knowledge, recall and written work.

#### **Key Stage 4- Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

##### **Good features**

- 247. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts covering life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.
- 248. They use scientific terms accurately when explaining their work, both orally and in writing.
- 249. Pupils can apply their scientific knowledge to help them understand and explain unfamiliar situations.
- 250. Pupils know and understand the impact of science on industry, the environment and the economy.

251. Pupils are able to communicate scientific ideas effectively, using text, charts, table and graphs.
252. Pupils achieve well in carrying out experiments co-operatively and in presenting their findings as a team, orally and in writing. They analyse and make appropriate deductions.

### **Shortcomings**

253. A number of pupils are either unable, or insufficiently interested, to recall previous work. This reduces their ability to build a detailed understanding of some scientific concepts.
254. Some pupils do not understand the purpose of practical work and do not apply creative or problem-solving skills.

<b>Sixth Form- Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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### **Good features**

255. Students have a good grasp of the subject and use specialist terminology well. They have a balanced view of recent controversial scientific developments such as genetic engineering.
256. Students are good at explaining scientific events, both orally and in writing. By asking relevant questions, they develop a good understanding of scientific issues.
257. Students carry out practical work purposefully. They make systematic observations and measurements and use mathematics to analyse their data. Students communicate their findings effectively, using relevant and well-constructed graphs.
258. They understand the sources of experimental error and how this can be reduced.

### **Shortcomings**

259. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Subject 2: Welsh second language</b>
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<b>Key Stage 3 - Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
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### **Good features**

260. Pupils participate fully in a variety of language activities on topics within their experience, in pairs and small groups.

261. The majority of pupils are able to understand short passages on familiar topics and use the language to express an opinion, giving reasons.
262. Pronunciation and intonation are fairly good and pupils are prepared to repeat to ensure perfection.
263. Year 9 pupils demonstrate sufficient confidence to extend their sentences with developing fluency and accuracy.
264. Pupils can read, clearly and meaningfully, short extracts and paragraphs they have completed themselves. They show a good understanding of reading material when completing related tasks.
265. A good variety of written tasks, including simple poems, are completed using a satisfactory range of patterns.

### **Shortcomings**

266. Pupils make limited use of language previously acquired.
267. A few pupils lack confidence in their oral work and tend to resort to their first language too readily.
268. Pupils of average and lower ability have difficulty with pronunciation and intonation when reading aloud.
269. In some classes, pupils do not develop their writing skills.
270. A small minority of pupils do not have sufficient depth and variety of language to make progress.

<b>Key Stage 4- Grade 2 : Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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### **Good features**

271. Pupils' level of understanding is good and they are able to use language in a variety of situations.
272. Familiar language is used confidently in role-play tasks which are performed in front of the class.
273. Pupils can read different types of texts of various lengths and respond to the contents.
274. They can use context to extract meaning, demonstrating a firm understanding of the information contained in the material.
275. Pupils use a range of writing patterns coherently and correctly. The standard of

writing of the abler pupils is good. They vary, effectively, the use of sentence patterns and verb tenses.

### **Shortcomings**

276. A small minority of pupils have difficulties in pronunciation, are reluctant to contribute in oral exchanges, and make errors in their written work.

## **Sixth form-Grade 2 : Good features and no important shortcomings**

### **Good features**

277. Students are making good progress and are building effectively on skills acquired in KS4.

278. Students listen perceptively, ask pertinent questions and exchange comments effectively, in response to ideas presented.

279. They use researching skills effectively when seeking information required to understand, for example, the background of the film studied.

280. Students use good presentation skills, supported by appropriate resources, to share information.

281. Students are making progress in examining literary themes, analysing content and responding to set texts, such as poetry.

282. Written work demonstrates good subject knowledge, with Y13 students developing their ability to analyse and respond to a good range of topics.

283. Students develop a good vocabulary and are improving their understanding of grammar and syntax.

### **Shortcomings**

284. Not all students are confident in speaking at length. They confine themselves to short answers when speaking with a stranger.

285. The written work of a small minority of students contains basic errors.

## **Subject 3: Design and Technology**

### **Key Stage 3- Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

### **Good features**

286. In all aspects of the subject, using different materials, pupils' making skills are good.

287. In all these material areas, most pupils plan their practical work well, with good skills in using time-plans in food technology.
288. In the best work, pupils use sketches and annotation effectively to explain their design solutions. Presentation skills are generally good in food and textiles.
289. In food technology, pupils' understanding of a specification is good, especially in relation to healthy eating and hygiene issues.
290. Pupils' design work shows effective use of prior research.

### **Shortcomings**

291. Standards of presentation are weak in many folders of work. Pupils do not readily improve and modify their design ideas or give reasons for doing so.
292. Many pupils have weak creative skills, rarely developing their ideas to any notable extent.

<b>Key Stage 4- Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
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### **Good features**

293. Standards of pupils' practical outcomes are good in all aspects of the subject, using a range of materials.
294. Pupils are confident and articulate in explaining their design ideas orally.
295. Pupils show good standards of research and investigative work in food and textiles and products reflect a range of processes and good quality finishing.
296. Most pupils research effectively using the Internet and produce work of good quality in their folders.

### **Shortcomings**

297. Standards in creative sketching are weak. Pupils do not readily modify and develop their design ideas.
298. Many pupils do not demonstrate, sufficiently, skills of creativity and independent learning.

<b>Sixth Form- Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
---

### **Good features**

299. In the best work, students' investigative and research skills are good with good use made of the Internet to explore ideas.

300. In textiles, design ideas are well developed and presented in a folder of work showing high levels of creative flair and imagination.
301. Students' knowledge of traditional construction and techniques in wood and metal are good.

### **Shortcomings**

302. Students' knowledge and understanding of materials outside traditional wood, metal and plastics are too narrow, resulting in limited creativity, flair and imagination in their designing skills.

<b>Subject 4 History</b>
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<b>KS3-Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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### **Good features**

303. Most pupils in KS3 have very good levels of background knowledge and understanding and their recall skills are secure.
304. Pupils are able to distinguish between primary and secondary sources. They increasingly demonstrate the ability to interrogate a range of sources and can assess these for both reliability and usefulness.
305. In Y7, pupils learning about the Battle of Hastings understand that events can have several causes and that some causes are more important than others.
306. In their work on the religious settlement of Elizabeth I, Y8 pupils use historical terminology accurately and demonstrate a good understanding of the concepts of change and continuity.
307. Year 9 pupils with SEN are able to extract information from pictorial sources of primary evidence and make valid conclusions. With support, they are able to sequence events and show a developing awareness of chronology.
308. Pupils of average and above average ability are able to plan an historical investigation and conduct interviews with confidence. They record their learning in a range of styles and formats such as letters, reports and audio recordings.
309. More able pupils produce good and sometimes very good quality written work. Pieces of extended writing are neatly presented, well planned and logically argued.

## **Shortcomings**

310. A small minority of average and lower ability pupils in Y8 and Y9 are insecure in their factual recall of recent work. Without support, they are unable to extract relevant information from written sources of information.

<b>KS4-Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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### **Good features**

311. Pupils in KS4 build successfully upon the range of skills acquired in KS3 and make good progress. They recall previous learning well and develop their understanding of historical terms and concepts. Pupils use subject specific vocabulary accurately and in the correct context.
312. They investigate historical questions effectively and can extract information from a variety of sources of evidence. In their study of Hitler's Germany, pupils use more complex sources of evidence with confidence and are able to test these for reliability, usefulness and bias.
313. In their study of the evacuation of Dunkirk, they understand that contemporaries and historians can interpret the same event in different ways. They are able to select evidence to support alternative interpretations of events and use their own knowledge to make a judgement.
314. Pupils understand that events can have multiple causes and can explain how these are interconnected. They can identify the most important cause and justify their choice. Some pupils understand that an incident can constitute a turning point in history.
315. Pupils communicate with increasing independence in a variety of ways. These include extended writing, visual and oral presentations.

### **Shortcomings**

316. A small minority of pupils do not always include sufficient detail from sources to support their answers.

<b>Sixth form- Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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317. Students make good progress. They read widely from a variety of textbooks and make detailed, well-organised notes.
318. In their written work, they are able to select and organise material to develop a logical argument based on evidence.
319. When considering historical problems, they use their own knowledge and evidence from sources to construct opposing and balanced arguments.

320. In class discussions, they express views with confidence. When challenged, they can give valid explanations and substantiate their judgements with reference to relevant examples.
321. In their work on the Elizabethan Church Settlement, students show a good understanding that historians have interpreted the same events in different ways. They are able to explain how interpretations differ and suggest reasons for this. The more able students are able to arrive at a balanced judgement on the merits of each interpretation.
322. In their work on maritime enterprise, students demonstrate a well-developed understanding of causation and can explain clearly the relative importance of different causal factors.

### **Shortcomings**

323. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Subject 5:Physical Education</b>
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<b>KS3 - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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### **Good features**

324. Most pupils understand the importance of preparing the body for exercise.
325. In dance, Y7 girls effectively use action words to compose interesting and innovative quality phrases of movement. They observe each other's work and provide good quality evaluation of how the phrase could be improved. They have a good understanding of technical terminology and use this well when analysing each other's work.
326. Pupils make good progress as they move through the key stage. By Y9 most girls are able to compose more complex phrases in small groups. Most are able to improve the quality of their work and spend time repeating and refining their compositions. They understand the importance of good posture and use expression in their work.
327. In football, most Y7 boys keep control of the ball when dribbling and passing in practice situations. The most able Y8 boys control the ball well in the game situation. They are able to select the correct pass to send a teammate into space in order to have an opportunity to score.
328. Most pupils have a good understanding of subject specific terminology and use it accurately in a variety of different contexts as they progress through the key stage.

## Shortcomings

329. In dance, a very small minority of Y9 pupils have difficulty remaining on task. As a result their work lacks extension, fluency and control.
330. Most boys have difficulty coping with the challenge of scoring long-range shots when hitting a stationary and moving ball. In the game situation, only a few utilise the space well and overall decision-making skills are less well refined.

<b>KS4 - Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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## Good and outstanding features

331. Pupils develop a very good understanding of components of fitness. In aerobics girls produce very good sequences that demonstrate their understanding of the difference between high and low impact work. Boys work at pace to complete a circuit that challenges their understanding of strength and cardiovascular endurance. The most able pupils produce outstanding work.
332. Most pupils understand the difference between static and dynamic stretching and use both in warm-up activities applicable to the activity.
333. GCSE pupils have well-refined basketball skills. They have a very good understanding of the requirements of the game and perform a wide range of attacking and defending skills with high levels of accuracy. The most able have outstanding decision-making skills. Most pupils confidently take on the role of referee.
334. GCSE pupils understand the components of fitness and how they can be tested. Entry level pupils work hard to maintain their performance in an interval-training environment. They understand the need to work at speed and use the recovery time between sets intelligently.
335. In football, most pupils understand the importance of teamwork. They control the ball well with both feet. They know when and where to pass the ball in order to take on the opposition and create space. Overall, most pupils make good decisions in the game.
336. In dance, most pupils have very good extension and are able to perform a series of complex movements with high levels of control and accuracy. Choreographic skills are good and most pupils perform their solos with confidence. They work independently to improve the quality of their work by repeating and refining their movements.

## Shortcomings

337. A small minority of pupils have difficulty evaluating their performance in order to improve the quality of their work.

**Sixth form - Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Good features**

338. Students have a very good understanding of the types of food required to maintain a healthy lifestyle. They understand the impact of good quality nutrition on performance in training and competition environments. They successfully use the Internet to find relevant information to support their learning.
339. Y12 students have a good knowledge and understanding of types of sponsorship. They effectively discuss the advantages and disadvantages of sponsorship and have a good awareness of how this funding contributes to the development of sport.
340. Y12 students use their knowledge of short and long-term memory in a practical context. They develop a very good understanding of selective memory as a result of participating in challenging practical classroom based activities.
341. Overall students' written work is good. They use their research and information technology skills well to present good quality assignments.
342. Students use extended answers to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the work being covered. They confidently ask questions related to the topic.

**Shortcomings**

343. A very small minority of students, particularly boys, have difficulty remaining on task and as a result do not always fully understand the work being covered.

**Subject 6: Drama**

**Key stage 3 – Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

**Good features**

344. The majority of pupils demonstrate a growing awareness and understanding of key dramatic terms.
345. Pupils are able to apply their understanding of drama techniques, such as “thought tracking” and “freeze frames” to produce effective practical work.
346. Most pupils use their powers of imagination and creative thinking to make drama, often incorporating the necessary elements of tension and conflict.

347. Pupils display sound progress as they move through the key stage in developing and presenting their work. They are able to use gestures and movement effectively in their performances.
348. Pupils are eager to respond to their own and to others' work. They are developing and refining their evaluation skills well, through thoughtful discussions.

### **Shortcomings**

349. A significant minority of pupils are unable to sustain the drama they have created. They often lose concentration and this impacts adversely on progress made.
350. Inappropriate behaviour and responses of a minority of pupils at the end of KS3 impede their progress in learning.

<b>Key stage 4 – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.</b>
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### **Good features**

351. By year 11, pupils demonstrate a secure understanding of key dramatic terms, forms and structures and can apply their knowledge to both practical work and analysis of texts.
352. Pupils display good performance skills, often showing sensitivity with an awareness of place, occasion and audience.
353. The majority of pupils are able to choose appropriate language, gesture and movement to enhance both improvisation and final performance work.
354. Pupils regularly evaluate their work and that of others through discussion, written course work and reviews.
355. Pupils are able to refer to and give sound evaluations of performances they have seen. They further use such evaluations to improve their own dramatic skills and understanding of theatre.

### **Shortcomings**

356. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Sixth Form – Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.</b>
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357. Students display a good awareness of dramatic form and structures and can apply their knowledge and understanding to performances they have seen and to the texts they are studying.

- 358. Students have a sound understanding of technical and design elements and use this knowledge in their planning of scripted productions and devised work.
- 359. Students are able to explore in depth, both in writing and in discussion, human relationships and tensions, which form the basis of much of the drama and theatre they are studying.
- 360. Students are able to move effectively from text to performance. They confidently create devised work for performance.
- 361. All students work well together to plan and deliver production work and perform with confidence and sensitivity.

### **Shortcomings**

- 362. There are no important shortcomings.

## School's response to the inspection

Staff and Governors will address the recommendations by the end of the academic year, and wherever possible:

Raise pupils' standards of achievement in:

- Engaging in their own learning
- Key Skills, particularly listening & writing
- Attendance and punctuality

These will continue to be priorities for us and will naturally feature in our School Development Plan.

Also, we will provide staff with further opportunities to enhance their skills in:

- Self-evaluation
- The range of teaching styles
- Promoting a culture of learning and achievement
- Assessment and target-setting

so they can continue to help pupils achieve higher standards.

We were most pleased that the Inspection team identified many strengths in the school in various subjects, and, in particular, how well we care for, guide and support learners; manage our resources and provide for learning experiences to meet the needs and interests of the learners and the wider community. These comprehensive and wide-ranging areas of good practice will help enable us to address any shortcomings.

A copy of the school's action plan in response to the Estyn recommendations will be sent to all parents / carers and the Governors' annual report will detail our progress with the recommendations of the Inspectors.

Finally, the school wishes to thank Miss G. Owen and the Inspection Team for their sensitive and positive manner when they worked with us during the inspection week.

## Appendix A

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Cantonian High School
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	11-19
Address of school	Fairwater Road Fairwater Cardiff
Post-code	CF5 3JR
Telephone number	02920-415250
Headteacher	Mrs Lois Spargo
Date of appointment	April 2003
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr R.Davies
Reporting inspector	Miss Glynis Owen
Dates of inspection	24 – 28 January 2005

## Appendix B

### School data and indicators

Year group	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y13	Y 14	Total
Number of pupils	172	202	219	209	210	85	49	-	1146
Total number of teachers									
	Full-time		Part-time			Full-time equivalent (fte)			
Number of teachers	68		5			71.3			
Staffing information									
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)								16:1	
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes									
Average teaching group size								21	
Overall contact ratio (percentage)								76%	

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole School
Term 1	90.4	89.5	86.5	81.8	84.6			86.5
Term 2	90.7	89.7	87.1	83.8	81.2			86.5
Term 3	87.4	86.8	83.2	87.2	88.3			86.5

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	25%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	140 temp. 7 perm.

## Appendix C

### National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 3:

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results: 2004																
Total number of pupils in Y9:216																
Percentage of pupils at each level																
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP	
English	Teacher assessment	School	6	1	2	0	0	1	15	27	31	12	4	0	0	
		National	0	1	3	0	0	2	8	21	33	23	9	0	0	
	Test	School	5	5	2	-	-	-	9	26	30	16	7	-	-	
		National	1	4	1	-	-	-	8	21	33	23	10	-	-	
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School														
		National														
	Test	School														
		National														
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	5	2	1	0	0	0	7	30	33	15	6	0	0	
		National	0	1	3	0	0	1	7	19	25	31	13	0	0	
	Test	School	4	5	1	-	-	-	3	22	37	25	7	-	-	
		National	0	5	1	-	-	-	5	17	20	36	15	-	-	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	4	0	0	0	0	0	7	30	32	20	7	0	0	
		National	0	1	3	0	0	0	6	20	32	27	11	0	0	
	Test	School	4	5	0	-	-	-	5	22	32	28	2	-	-	
		National	0	4	0	-	-	-	5	17	33	28	13	-	-	

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	35.7%	In the school	46.5%
In Wales	57%	In Wales	57%

**Public Examination Results:**

<b>For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ</b>			
Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2004__		208	
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil		32	
<b>The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2004__:</b>	School	UA	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	80	85	87
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	35	48	51
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	79	82	85
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	17	35	38
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	98	97	97
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	74	72	75
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G C or the vocational qualification equivalent	87	91	93
attained no graded GCSE C or the vocational qualification equivalent	13	9	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	1	3	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		
<b>For pupils aged 16, 17 and 18, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs</b>			
Number of pupils aged 16, 17 and 18 in January 2004		78	
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2004__		56	
Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2004__		22	
	School	UA	Wales
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C	50	67	68
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E	88	93	95
Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects	16	21	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

- 16 inspectors spent the equivalent of 49 days at the school.
- 92 lessons were observed in the six subjects inspected and 37 lessons by other teachers.
- Inspectors attended assemblies and some registrations and extra-curricular activities.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, members of the senior management team, the governor with responsibility for SEN, heads of department, some heads of year, staff with whole-school responsibilities and members of the administrative and support staff.
- Work across the curriculum, from four pupils in each year group, of differing abilities, was examined.
- These pupils, together with representatives of other activities, were interviewed. There was informal discussion with many other pupils.
- Pupils' work in each of the six subjects was examined by subject inspectors.
- The Registered Inspector met the staff and governing body before the inspection.
- 16 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and 32 parents replied to the questionnaire.
- Documentation provided by the school was analysed before and during the inspection.
- Feedback was given to departments and to the headteacher and deputies during the week of the inspection. Feedback was also given to the headteacher, senior management team and governors after the inspection.

## Appendix E

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Miss G. Owen	KQ1, KQ5
Mr P. Carter	KQ6
Ms J. Edwards	KQ2
Mr D. Williams	KQ3
Mr C. Rowlands	KQ4
Dr A. Cooke	KQ7
Mrs C. Lewis	Lay Inspector
Mr D. Morgan	SEN
Mrs H. Jones	Welsh second language
Mr D. Hughes	Science
Mr M. Pickin	Science
Mr H. Buckland	Design & Technology
Mr K. Hopkins	Design & Technology
Mr G. Barker	History
Mrs J. Longville	Physical Education
Mrs J. Davies	Drama

### Acknowledgement

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

### Contractor

Celtic Inspection Services Unit  
UWIC  
Cyncoed Road  
Cardiff CF23 6XD  
Tel: 029 20416577

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

**CANTONIAN HIGH SCHOOL**

**Fairwater Road**

**Fairwater**

**Cardiff**

**A SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS**

**Date of Inspection: 24 – 28 January 2005**

**by**

**Miss G Owen  
110 8205**

**Date: 30<sup>th</sup> March 2005**

**Under Estyn contract number: T/27/04**

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Cantonian High 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 Cantonian High School took place between 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2005. An independent team of 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:

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

## 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

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.

## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Cantonian High School is an 11-19, mixed community school serving Fairwater and Pentreban, in Cardiff Unitary Authority (UA). There are 1146 pupils on roll, including 134 in the sixth form. Numbers have been fairly constant over recent years but there is now a falling roll due to demographic changes. There are 50 fewer pupils than at the time of the last inspection.
2. Parts of the catchment area are economically disadvantaged and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals (25%) is well above the national average of 15.7%.
3. The school caters for the full range of ability. However, the large proportion of pupils is of average and lower ability and the small minority of higher ability, with few very able pupils. Six per cent of pupils have statements of special educational needs (SEN) and a further 16% have been identified on the SEN register as needing further support. There is a special unit for 11 pupils with severe learning difficulties on site.
4. No pupils speak Welsh as their first language and there is a small but growing number of pupils from ethnic minorities, of whom 41 receive teaching in English as an additional language.
5. The school has three main partner primary schools and is part of the Cardiff Collegium to extend curricular provision for pupils aged 14-19, working with three other providers to offer courses jointly.
6. The school is in a period of transition. The headteacher, two deputy heads and two of the four assistant heads have all been in post for less than two years, some considerably less. There is also a recently appointed Bursar and a Workload Manager, who work closely with the headteacher and senior management team.
7. The school was last inspected in March 1999.

### The school's priorities and targets

8. The school's aims and priorities are based on the mission statement: "The best from each, success for all." The aims have been translated into the school development plan, which has 14 priorities. These are comprehensive, relating to standards of achievement, the quality of education provided and leadership and management. Targets are set for a one-year and three-year period and numerical targets are also set for examination success.

## Summary

9. Cantonian High School is an improving school. The headteacher and senior management team have introduced a large number of initiatives, through the school development plan, to raise standards and improve the quality of education in the last eighteen months. As yet, these are not fully embedded across the school, and there is some way to go. However, there are signs of progress in a number of areas.

### Table of grades awarded

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

### Standards of Achievement

Standards in subjects inspected			
Subject	KS3	KS4	Sixth form
Science	3	3	2
Welsh second language	3	2	2
Design & Technology	3	3	3
History	2	2	2
Physical Education	2	1	2
Drama	3	2	2

## **KS3 and KS4**

### **Standards of Achievement**

10. The extent to which pupils make good progress varies between subjects and between classes. As indicated above, standards are good with no important shortcomings in history and physical education at key stage (KS) 3. In the other four subjects inspected, good features outweighed shortcomings. At KS4, standards improve. There are outstanding features in physical education, no important shortcomings in three subjects and some shortcomings in two subjects.

11. The following grades were awarded in the six subjects inspected:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
11%	44%	40%	5%	0%

12. These grades are above current national targets of 50% of lessons to be graded 1 and 2 and 95% of lessons to be graded 1, 2 and 3.

13. However, there is scope for further improvement in the standards which pupils achieve. A significant minority of pupils do not show good attitudes to learning and a small minority of these pupils exhibit challenging behaviour, and do not show sufficient respect for others. Sometimes, this can adversely affect the learning of the group. Whilst this is more common in middle to lower ability sets, some pupils in top sets can also be disengaged.

14. Pupils generally make better progress in practical work and in short, focussed tasks, than in whole-class sessions. When pupils are actively engaged in their learning, they work with greater enthusiasm.

15. Pupils' key skills are not yet sufficiently developed to enable them to work to their full potential in all areas. Standards in speaking, reading, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) are higher than standards in listening and writing. Access to ICT resources, during the school day, is, however, limited in subjects other than information technology (IT).

16. Pupils with SEN receive good support in small groups and achieve well. Those who receive teaching in English as an additional language also make good progress.

17. Sporadic attendance adversely affects the progress of a significant minority of pupils. There is also a lack of urgency in arriving at school and at classes on time among a number of pupils.

18. There is an improving trend in examination results but results at the end of KS3 and KS4 have been below average for schools with a similar intake in recent years.

19. There are also signs of improvement in a number of subjects currently, though these have not yet been translated into examination success. When teaching is good or outstanding, pupils achieve well. Standards in physical education and history are particularly good.

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

20. In the six subjects inspected, the grades awarded for teaching were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
18%	46%	32%	4%	0%

21. These grades are also above current national targets.
22. There are many committed teachers who give generously of their time to help pupils outside lessons and to organise visits in the United Kingdom and abroad. There has been a considerable growth in the out-of-hours learning in the last few years, through CELTICA, the learning centre, and this is an outstanding feature of the school. The school has achieved national recognition for the quality of this provision.
23. There have been a number of long-term absences among the staff in recent years which have impacted upon continuity and progression in pupils' learning.
24. Although teachers have good subject knowledge, they do not always use this to engage and motivate learners in a wide range of learning experiences.
25. Teachers recognise the need to instil in pupils a positive attitude to work and most have good working relationships with pupils. However, an inconsistent approach to the application of new strategies such as 'discipline for learning' means that sanctions and praise are not applied effectively.
26. There is similar variation in the quality of assessment, and in the setting and marking of homework. The school has recently introduced new assessment and feedback procedures which include target-setting and the use of data to improve standards. This practice is, as yet, inconsistent.
27. Pastoral support to pupils is an outstanding feature of the school. There have been imaginative recent initiatives to support individuals in their academic progress as well as in their personal development. Some pupils in each year group are targeted to receive mentoring, sometimes with help from higher education students in Cardiff.
28. Very good links with primary schools ensure the smooth and effective transition from KS2 to KS3. Pupils also speak highly of the personal and social education programme, recently revised. Careers education prepares them well for the world of work.
29. There are other good curricular initiatives. All pupils at KS3 have taster courses in Spanish, German and Japanese, with a well-established exchange

scheme to a school in Japan. Drama is also taught to all at KS3. At KS4, there is a reasonable range of vocational courses as well as traditional General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses, and an alternative curriculum for those at risk of disengagement.

30. The provision for pupils with SEN has been re-organised and is now good, with some outstanding features in the support given to pupils with severe learning difficulties.

### **Leadership and management**

31. The vision and drive from the headteacher and senior management team have been instrumental in moving the school forwards thus far. They have clearly identified appropriate priorities for development and kept up the pace of change. There have been discernible improvements particularly in the role of middle managers, collaborative working with staff and imaginative use of support staff.
32. Continuing professional development has been at the heart of progress and there are good systems in place to support those new to teaching. The school has been recognised again as an 'Investor in People' this year, for the quality of its staff development.
33. Systematic procedures for monitoring performance have been established recently. Although self-evaluation informs planning for improvement, the effectiveness of these plans is constrained by variability in the extent to which these arrangements have become embedded in routines at departmental level and reflect whole-school aims.
34. Governors are strongly supportive of the school and endorse the way in which it is moving forward. However, they are not involved in acquiring first-hand evidence for themselves through monitoring procedures, and as such their role as 'critical friends' is not fully developed.
35. Whilst there is good practice in leadership and management among some departmental and pastoral teams, middle management is not consistently good. Best practice is not sufficiently shared to ensure that all pupils receive teaching and learning which meets their needs.
36. There also remains work to be done in involving all pupils in this ethos of learning, achievement and shared values as a community.
37. Improvements have been made to the accommodation after a critical report at the time of the last inspection. Interior accommodation is now good overall and provides well for learning. Nevertheless, there are some shortcomings in the outside fabric of one building, and in a few departments.

38. Cuts have had to be made to rectify a financial deficit and that has had some implications on resourcing. The school is now prioritising its spending efficiently after full and open debate. Available resources are generally used effectively.

### **SIXTH FORM**

39. There has been substantial change in the ethos of the sixth form this year, and initiatives have already impacted on students' learning and personal development, to a greater extent than at KS3 and KS4. Expectations are that they attend school throughout the day, experience a broad curriculum and take a leading role in the life and work of the school. The school aims to increase the staying-on rate from year (Y) 11, and an extension to the sixth form facilities is planned for summer 2005. The new head of sixth form, this academic year, has made a significant impact, supported by the school's senior management team.

### **Standards of Achievement**

40. In the six subjects inspected, standards were good with no important shortcomings in five subjects and, in the other, good features outweighed some shortcomings.

41. The grades awarded for a very small sample of lessons were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	64%	29%	0%	0%

42. There is a wide range of ability within the sixth form, including students with SEN. Students of differing abilities make good progress overall.
43. Their key skills improve in the sixth form. There is emphasis on the importance of good key skills and students are working towards compiling portfolios of best practice. They are generally articulate and use numeracy and ICT competently.
44. Personal and social skills also develop well. Students play an increasingly active part in helping younger pupils in lessons, in extra-curricular activities and in fund-raising initiatives. They take a leading role in the School Council and participate in a wide range of sixth-form activities.
45. The attendance, punctuality and attitudes of the large majority of students are improving, particularly in Y12, but this remains an area for on-going monitoring.
46. The retention rate during the sixth form and from Y12 to Y13 has been identified by the school as an area for improvement. Examination results have been representative of the full range of abilities and attitudes, below national averages but with small numbers, making comparisons difficult. Most students currently in the sixth form are well motivated to succeed and proceed to Higher Education.

## The quality of education and training

47. Grades awarded for teaching in the small sample of lessons seen in the sixth form were as follows:

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
7%	71%	22%	0%	0%

48. Sixth form lessons are characterised by positive relationships, good individual support and an appropriate level of challenge.
49. Teachers provide well-structured learning opportunities which are closely linked to examination requirements. Generally, teachers encourage independent thought, but sometimes rely too much on their own input and do not encourage students to develop their own opinions.
50. Most assessment is of high quality and provides targets for improvement, although some work is infrequently marked.
51. The sixth form curriculum provides a broad range of academic subjects, with an increasing number of vocational courses. Wherever possible, the school tries to accommodate students' preferences. At present, the need to offer a variety of courses at Advanced (A) 2 level, and very small numbers in groups, is a contributory factor to large classes at KS3 and KS4. The school recognises this and is working through the Cardiff collegium to offer joint courses with other schools and the college.
52. There is planned induction into the sixth form. Students' progress is then regularly monitored, with good advice on careers and applications to higher education.

## Leadership and management

53. The good management systems in the school as a whole are evident in the sixth form: good communication, collaboration, self-evaluation and planning for improvement. There is a regular cycle of meetings and consistency of approach between form tutors.
54. Evaluation of provision leads to effective planning for improvement and the school has identified appropriate priorities to raise standards, such as improving attendance and punctuality. Development of students' key skills is also appropriately identified for on-going progress.
55. Teaching and associate staff are effectively deployed. Access to ICT resources has been facilitated, but the current accommodation for sixth formers is not conducive to good independent learning or social exchange. The planned changes will make a considerable difference in the new academic year.

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

56. The school has been through considerable change since the last inspection at senior management level, with the retirement of the previous headteacher and acting headteacher, and changes in the senior management team. There has been some progress in terms of standards and examination results, in the achievement of boys and in pupils' written work. The senior management team is committed to school improvement and recognises there is further work to do. Personal and social education (PSE) has been successfully revised, aspects of the accommodation have received attention and a daily act of collective worship is carefully planned for assemblies and for tutor groups.
57. Target-setting for individual pupils and improvement in the overall attendance rate remain priorities.

### **Recommendations**

The school has a comprehensive school development plan. It should focus on the following, to consolidate progress and improve further:

- R1. Continue to improve standards and examination results.
- R2. Make more rigorous use of self-evaluation at middle management level, to plan for improvement.
- R3. Extend the range of teaching styles to engage pupils more actively in their own learning.
- R4. Promote the culture of learning and achievement being put in place, by consistent application of the discipline for learning policy.
- R5. Implement further the plans to develop pupils' key skills, particularly listening and writing.
- R6. Ensure that teachers use assessment and target-setting to support individual pupils in lessons in KS3 and KS4.
- R7. Improve attendance and punctuality.

### **Acknowledgement**

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