

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

**YSGOL Y GRANGO
ALLT TY GWYN
RHOSLLANERCHRUGOG
WREXHAM
LL14 1EL**

School Number: 665/4029

Date of Inspection: 8th – 11th November 2004

by

**Mr J Emlyn James
W098/3292**

Date: 13 January 2005

Under Estyn contract number: T/4/04

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Ysgol y Grango 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 Ysgol y Grango took place between 8th and 11th November 2004. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr J Emlyn James undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Ysgol y Grango is a well-established 11-16 comprehensive school situated in Rhosllanerchrugog and maintained by Wrexham Unitary Authority (UA). There are 458 pupils on roll compared with 625 at the time of the previous inspection in November 1998, with more boys than girls overall, but with variations within each year group. Post-16, pupils can choose to transfer to sixth form, sixth form college or further education colleges. About 60% of pupils choose to continue in full-time education beyond the age of 16, slightly below the proportion for similar schools.
2. Most pupils come from Rhosllanerchrugog and the surrounding semi-rural areas to the north west of Wrexham. Some pupils from the area attend a Welsh medium school or travel further. Welsh is taught as a second language. No pupils speak Welsh as a first language or to an equivalent standard. There are very few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds.
3. Pupils come from the full range of ability. The intake is fully comprehensive although it contains a relatively high proportion of pupils of average ability and below, with a significant number on entry scoring well below their chronological age. The number of pupils with statements of special educational needs (SEN), 25 pupils, is also high. There are an additional 32 pupils on the school's SEN register for school action (SA) or school action plus (SA+). These figures indicate that about 11% of the school's pupils have SEN. Nineteen pupils are disapplied from aspects of the National Curriculum (NC) and six have NC modification to meet their special educational needs.
4. Pupils are drawn from the full range of social, but generally less affluent, backgrounds. Most pupils are from neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged homes, although there is not a uniform pattern across the catchment and the school has evidence, within the intake, of an increased number of socially disadvantaged pupils. Approximately 17% of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, approaching the Welsh average of around 20%.
5. All four members of the school's leadership team, of headteacher, deputy and assistant headteachers, have been appointed since the 1998 inspection, most recently the headteacher from September 2004.

The school's priorities and targets

6. The school's published aims and associated values are respect for the individual, to enable fulfilment of potential, and to gain the widest possible range of skills and knowledge, including understanding of society and community.

7. The current school development plan (SDP) produced by the leadership team clearly identifies seven whole school priorities and success criteria. Each department produces its own improvement plan in line with these priorities. Progress is monitored following a standard agenda.

Summary

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?	3
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2
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?	3

Standards

Subject	KS3	KS4
Science	2	3
Welsh	2	2
Design technology (DT)	3	2
History	3	3
Physical education (PE)	2	2
Religious education (RE)	2	4

8. The team inspected the standards that pupils achieve in six subjects. In KS3, standards have good features with no important shortcomings in four of these subjects and in two subjects good features outweigh shortcomings. Standards have good features with no important shortcomings in KS4 in three subjects. In two subjects, good features outweigh shortcomings. One subject in KS4 has some good features, but there are shortcomings in important areas.
9. In only 4% of classes observed are there any important shortcomings. The figures in the table below compare very favourably with those achieved in the majority of schools in Wales and greatly exceed the targets set by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG).

10. The following table shows the standards that pupils achieved in the six subjects.

70 lessons	% Grade 1	% Grade 2	% Grade 3	% Grade 4	% Grade 5
KS3	5	50	43	2	0
KS4	0	54	39	7	0
Whole School	3	51	42	4	0

11. Pupils achieved well in the 2004 KS3 national assessment tests in English, mathematics and science. Their achievements were largely comparable with those in similar Welsh schools and substantially exceeded their results for 2003 in each subject. These outcomes were better than the school's published performance targets for 2004.
12. Usually in recent years, the proportion achieving level 5 or above has been markedly higher in science than in mathematics or English. In 2004, the differences were much less marked, when the highest proportion was in mathematics. Girls outperformed boys by relatively small margins at level 5 and above in English and mathematics. In science the proportion of boys achieving level 5 or above was much higher than that of girls.
13. Standards achieved in KS3 tests have improved since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils gaining level 5 or above in all three subjects has risen from 31% in 1998 to 41% in 2004, which is below the national average, but in line with the proportion in similar schools.
14. Achievements in the 2004 GCSE examinations also showed improvement. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSE grades A*-C has risen from 32% in 1998 to 42% in 2004 and exceeds the published agreed targets.
15. Although success in examinations at the end of KS4 tends to vary from year to year, partly due to the small size of each cohort, there is noticeable trend of overall improvement. At present around 60% of pupils leave the school at 16 to remain in full-time education, which is a smaller proportion than nationally.
16. In most subjects, girls generally outperform the boys although by a smaller margin than formerly. Strategies to reduce these differences remain a focus for the school.
17. Pupils with a wide range of different SEN make very good progress. They respond and achieve very well.
18. Standards in communication skills have good features which outweigh shortcomings in both key stages. Most listen well to the teachers and to each other. They show respect for each other's views in class discussion and in pair and group work. A small number do not always listen attentively and pupils of middle ability rarely give extended responses. Reading skills are good. Most pupils read with fluency and accuracy. The focus on basic skills in the tutor period has resulted in improved standards in skimming and scanning to retrieve information. In both key stages good features of pupils' writing outweigh

shortcomings. Other than in English the usage of extended writing expected in subjects is limited.

19. Overall, the standards of pupils' numeracy are adequate throughout the school but progress is being hindered by the absence of a specific coordinator and a policy. The skills pupils acquire in their formal information technology (IT) lessons are inadequately used to improve standards in lessons across most subjects. Shortages of equipment and appropriate software are contributory causes to inadequate usage, but overall planning and coordination of ICT use is also underdeveloped.
20. The rate of attendance is unsatisfactory. The school works very hard to reduce absences and a good number of appropriate strategies are used. However a significant minority of pupils, particularly those of average and lower ability have periods of long absence or patterns of intermittent attendance.
21. The vast majority of pupils show interest in their work and have a positive attitude towards learning. Pupils' attitudes in class and towards learning are often good, but in a small number of classes, a minority of pupils show a lack of interest and commitment. Generally pupils behave well and relate well to one another and their teachers. Pupils know that they are responsible for their own actions and the vast majority respond and conduct themselves maturely at all times.
22. There is a strong community ethos in the school with an extensive range of links with the local community, which enhances pupils' educational experiences. Pupils have a good knowledge of the world of work though know less about entrepreneurship.

The quality of education and training

23. The following table shows the quality of teaching in all the lessons observed during the inspection:

101 lessons	% Grade 1	% Grade 2	% Grade 3	% Grade 4	% Grade 5
KS3	5	68	25	2	0
KS4	0	67	33	0	0
Whole School	3	67	29	1	0

24. There are no important shortcomings in the teaching in 70% of classes. This greatly exceeds the WAG targets of 50% to match this criterion. At 99%, the WAG target for 95% of teaching to achieve grade 3 or better is also exceeded.
25. The increased consistency and evenness of the quality of teaching is a strength of the school and contains elements of good practice, which can be shared.
26. The quality of teaching in the six subjects inspected was predominantly judged to have good features with no important shortcomings overall.
27. Current procedures for assessing pupils' achievements are targeted for review and change in the SDP. The school has recognised that the quality of

assessment of pupils' work is inconsistent across and within departments and that variations in approach lead to confusion for both pupils and parents.

28. There is some good practice in most departments in assessing end of unit tests and common tasks, but overall there is insufficient emphasis on developmental assessment strategies.
29. The curriculum overall meets the needs of all pupils and reflects the aims set out for pupils of statutory school age in the Education Act 1996.
30. The curriculum is accessible for all pupils including those with SEN. Pupils have opportunities to obtain an appropriate range of qualifications. It is appropriately broad and balanced in each key stage. It provides effective continuity and progression between years and key stages.
31. The planning for the development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory overall, but ICT is underdeveloped. In a minority of schemes of work opportunities have been identified for pupils to develop basic and key skills.
32. A good range of extra-curricular activities is available for all pupils.
33. The school provides well-focused and helpful information for parents. Termly newsletters, information about the curriculum, pupil reports and the media group website provide effective channels of communication. There is a small but active Parent Teacher Association which is supplemented by other parents for fundraising events. There is a mutually beneficial partnership with the community. The school sees itself as a community school and wants to further develop this ethos.
34. The school is generally successful in ensuring that the majority of pupils acquire the appropriate knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to progress. They are developing as independent learners and taking more responsibility for their own learning. The breadth and quality of the curriculum ensures that the learning experiences reflect most national priorities and lay the foundation for lifelong learning.
35. The school has a clearly defined pastoral care system, managed well by two assistant headteachers. They have a clear understanding of their roles which include monitoring and guiding academic, personal and social development. The monitoring of academic progress is not as strong as that of the pastoral.
36. The school has a caring and positive attitude towards pupils with SEN and is successful in meeting the needs of pupils with wide and complex needs.

Leadership and management

37. The school has clear published aims and associated values which are displayed throughout the school and understood by all. These encapsulate respect for the individual, to enable fulfilment of potential and to gain the widest possible range of skills and knowledge, including knowledge of society and community. An

appropriate range of effective policies and procedures to embrace and facilitate this philosophy is in place, although ensuring the consistent application of policies and procedures is underdeveloped.

38. The headteacher and senior managers provide effective leadership. They have a thorough understanding of the school's many strengths and with the benefits of insight and determination provided by the new headteacher, there is now an awareness of areas for development and to exploit potential. Pupils and staff are well known and respected.
39. Higher expectations for the school's future are being successfully nurtured, and disseminated, the tangible outcomes of which are already being commented on within the school and community.
40. The school's self-evaluation report honestly, realistically and accurately addresses the seven key questions of the new common inspection framework. The review was put together by the previous headteacher and usefully updated by the new headteacher to add her perceptions of strengths, priorities and areas for development. This proved a valuable exercise for all concerned. An overall judgement was made and each key question was graded. The report findings of the inspection team closely match those of the school's self-evaluation report.
41. The SDP covers seven headings which appropriately focus on school improvement.
42. Leadership has a clear vision and overview for the school's direction. Self-evaluation has only recently begun to permeate all areas and aspects of the school effectively, by fitting into the school's planning cycle and becoming integral to practice. It is developing further and is becoming instrumental in driving the school forward.
43. The school has enough well qualified, experienced staff to meet the needs of the curriculum in almost all subjects, with the exception of specialist ICT. With the exception of DT, there are sufficient, appropriately skilled non-teaching staff to enable the school to function effectively. Support staff who assist SEN pupils are well trained and integrated into the life of the school.
44. The provision of learning resources is mainly inadequate. Capitation, whilst fairly distributed, is low, resulting in shortages of books and equipment in most subjects. Numbers of computers are below average, old and prone to breakdown.
45. There are enough rooms for the number of pupils on roll. In most subjects the classrooms are enlivened with displays of work. However, there are serious shortcomings in accommodation, parts of which are in poor repair, present a depressing environment and in need of redecoration.
46. Within tight financial constraints, the school manages its budget effectively. The headteacher, with the leadership group, works with the governing body to draw

up the budget, which fits the priorities of the SDP and is monitored by the governors' finance committee.

47. The school achieves satisfactory value for money.

Recommendations

48. In order to improve further, the school needs to:
- R1. Maintain the school's positive recent developments.
 - R2. Continue to raise expectations and achievements in all subjects, especially in those subjects where shortcomings have been highlighted.
 - R3. Develop a whole-school assessment policy which ensures the consistency of day-to-day marking, that pupils review their progress more effectively, understand their strengths and weaknesses, set clear targets for improvement and understand what they must do to improve more.
 - R4. Extend the existing strategies to improve unsatisfactory levels of attendance.
 - R5. Further develop and use monitoring and evaluation procedures of teaching and learning, and the progress and effectiveness of policies and initiatives consistently, to secure coherent whole-school responses. Review, share and disseminate existing identified good practice to all, in order to extend the range of teaching and learning styles and strategies.
 - R6. Ensure that planning for the use of ICT is embedded in schemes of work in all subjects so that pupils come to regard its use as a basic tool for learning, and further develop and implement initiatives for whole-school policies for literacy and numeracy.
 - R7. Provide sufficient time for religious education in KS4.
 - R8. Continue to work closely with the UA to secure identified maintenance and refurbishment to the buildings, to create an improved learning environment.
49. The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving this report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

Standards

Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

50. This grade is in agreement with the school's own self-evaluation.
51. Pupils achieved well in the 2004 KS3 national assessment tests in English, mathematics and science. Their achievements were largely comparable with those in similar Welsh schools and substantially exceeded their results for 2003 in each subject. These outcomes were better than the school's published performance targets for 2004.
52. Usually in recent years, the proportion achieving level 5 or above has been markedly higher in science than in mathematics or English. In 2004, the differences were much less marked, when the highest proportion was in mathematics. Girls outperformed boys by relatively small margins at level 5 and above in English and mathematics. In science the proportion of boys achieving level 5 or above was much higher than that of girls.
53. Standards achieved in KS3 tests have improved since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils gaining level 5 or above in all three subjects has risen from 31% in 1998 to 41% in 2004, which is below the national average, but in line with the proportion in similar schools.
54. Achievements in the 2004 GCSE examinations also showed improvement. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSE grades A*-C has risen from 32% in 1998 to 42% in 2004 and exceeds the published agreed targets.
55. Although success in examinations at the end of KS4 tends to vary from year to year, partly due to the small size of each cohort, there is noticeable trend of overall improvement. At present around 60% of pupils leave the school at 16 to remain in full-time education, which is a smaller proportion than nationally.
56. In most subjects, girls generally outperform the boys although by a smaller margin than formerly. Strategies to reduce these differences remain a focus for the school.
57. The team inspected the standards that pupils achieve in six subjects. In KS3, standards have good features with no important shortcomings in four of these subjects and in two subjects good features outweigh shortcomings. Standards have good features with no important shortcomings in KS4 in three subjects. In two subjects good features outweigh shortcomings. One subject in KS4 has some good features, but there are shortcomings in important areas.
58. In only 4% of classes observed are there any important shortcomings. The figure shown in the table above in the summary section compare very favourably with

those achieved in the majority of schools in Wales and greatly exceed the targets set by WAG.

59. Across both key stages, pupils who present a wide range of different SEN, make very good progress. They work and achieve very well in response to the school's quality of provision, which is a strength.

Pupils' progress in learning

60. The school uses a range of analyses and data to determine targets and to benchmark progress for departments and the school. In 2004 these targets were exceeded, which indicates generally good progress.
61. Within subjects, individual pupils, particularly of middle ability, are often unaware of what they are expected to achieve, of how well they are doing, or of what they need to do to improve their learning. Greater consistency of approach is required within and between subjects, in engaging pupils in sharing targets and identifying strategies to meet these targets. Nevertheless, most pupils make at least satisfactory progress towards fulfilling their potential. The progress of a small number of pupils is hindered by poor or intermittent attendance.
62. In addition to gains in subject specific knowledge, understanding and skills, pupils' personal key skills are developed and nurtured naturally in most lessons.

The development of pupils' personal, social and learning skills

63. The vast majority of pupils show interest in their work and have a positive attitude towards learning. In subjects and activities, pupils collaborate well to share views and information.
64. Pupils' attitudes in class and towards learning are often good but in a small number of classes, a minority of pupils show a lack of interest and commitment. There is little time wasted between classroom transfers, and the attitudes of pupils in breaks and lunchtimes around the school is good.
65. Generally pupils behave well and relate well to one another and their teachers. Pupils who have additional educational needs or disability have the full respect of other learners. Pupils know that they are responsible for their own actions and the vast majority respond and conduct themselves maturely at all times.
66. The rate of attendance is unsatisfactory. The school works very hard to reduce absences and a good number of appropriate strategies are used. However a significant minority of pupils, particularly those of average and lower ability have periods of long absence or patterns of intermittent attendance. School registers are maintained in accordance with statutory requirements.
67. Punctuality is good at the beginning of the school day and generally pupils attend lessons promptly.

68. The school places a strong emphasis on nurturing self-discipline, honesty and responsibility. The vast majority of pupils respond well and have a clear sense of right and wrong and show respect for each other and adults.
69. Pupils know about different cultures, beliefs and lifestyles and how they differ from their own. The few pupils from ethnic minority groups that attend the school are well supported and integrate naturally to the daily life of the school.
70. There is a strong community ethos in the school with an extensive range of links with the local community which enhances pupils' educational experiences. Pupils have a good knowledge of the world of work though know less about entrepreneurship.
71. Standards in communication skills have good features which outweigh shortcomings in both key stages.
72. Most pupils listen well to the teachers and to each other. They show respect for each other's views in class discussion and in pair and group work. Most understand and use subject terminology. Able pupils pose questions and can argue a case when required. In both key stages a number of girls are less confident in putting forward a point of view; a small number do not always listen attentively and pupils of middle ability rarely give extended responses.
73. Reading skills are good. Pupils with reading difficulties have effective specialist support and make good progress. Most pupils read with fluency and accuracy and there is good understanding of a range of texts, including pictures and the Internet. The focus on basic skills in the tutor period has resulted in improved standards in skimming and scanning to retrieve information. The English department effectively promotes reading for pleasure in KS3.
74. In both key stages, good features of pupils' writing outweigh shortcomings. In English, most pupils produce well structured extended writing for a variety of audiences and purposes but the range of writing expected in other subjects is limited. There is insufficient whole school emphasis on extended writing, the use of writing frames and drafting for improvement. The basic skills initiative has helped to improve technical competence.
75. Overall, the standards of pupils' numeracy are adequate throughout the school but progress is being hindered by the absence of a specific coordinator and a policy. In lessons observed, there was evidence of the use of a range of arithmetic and algebraic techniques, pupils measuring and marking out accurately for manufacture, and the effective use of graphs to illustrate data and for analysis.
76. The skills pupils acquire in their formal IT lessons are inadequately used to improve standards in lessons across most subjects. Only in DT and music and in helping pupils with SEN to develop their literacy and numeracy skills is ICT used to good effect in both key stages. In geography, good use is made of ICT in KS4. In the core subjects the use of ICT is unsatisfactory in both key stages.

77. The ICT applications used by pupils in most subjects are mainly word processing packages and the Internet for research purposes. Spreadsheets, databases and more sophisticated forms of communicating information are underused.
78. Shortages of equipment and appropriate software are contributory causes to inadequate usage, but overall planning and coordination of ICT use is also underdeveloped.
79. Pupils' problem solving skills are developed well in many subjects and in whole school initiatives. In subjects such as PE and DT, effective problem solving challenges are built into the teaching programme. Pupils also experience a two-day industrial problem solving event in Y11, and in Y9 they problem solve for fund raising.
80. Pupils regularly experience creative opportunities in a number of subjects, and examples are to be seen across the curriculum. In art, many creative responses are to be found, particularly in the use of ceramics. In drama, pupils improvise well and in English they write descriptively and create poetry. In music, they compose and play musical instruments, and in DT in KS4, they have the opportunity to produce original products.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

81. This grade confirms the school's own self-evaluation.

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

82. There are no important shortcomings in the teaching of 70% of classes. This exceeds the WAG target that teaching should match this criterion in 50% of classes. In only 1% of classes are there important shortcomings. This is better than the WAG target figure for teaching to achieve grade 3 or better in 95% of classes.
83. The quality of teaching in the six subjects inspected was adjudged predominantly to have good features with no important shortcomings overall. There are some shortcomings, outweighed by good features, in DT, science, history and RE. There are outstanding features in the teaching of RE in KS3.
84. In Welsh and PE, every lesson had good features with no important shortcomings. In history and RE, the great majority of lessons observed had good features and no important shortcomings. In DT, 64% of lessons in KS3 had good features which outweighed shortcomings and in 1% of lessons there were some good features, but there were shortcomings in important areas. In science, 48% of lessons had good features and no important shortcomings; the majority of these were in KS3. 52% of science lessons observed had good features which outweighed shortcomings; the majority of these lessons were in KS4.
85. Good quality teaching is one of the school's strengths and has a positive impact upon pupils' learning, attitudes and behaviour. It contributes substantially to the good standards achieved by the majority of pupils.
86. Teachers are suitably well qualified to match the requirements of the school's curriculum. They have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects which they teach and they extend and up-date their expertise through continuing professional development (CPD). Teachers plan their lessons carefully and present their pupils with appropriately challenging work which is well matched to their needs. Enthusiastic and committed approaches to teaching ensure that most pupils make appropriate progress.
87. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. Pupils learn in a warm and caring environment where there are good levels of mutual respect and courtesy.

88. Teachers know their pupils well. They prepare work carefully, and take full account of the differing needs of individual pupils, so that they are well challenged with tasks which match their abilities. In most lessons, pupils are made aware of the learning objectives at the beginning of a session. Useful plenary sessions in many lessons encourage pupils to consolidate what they have learned and to evaluate the progress they have made. Teachers pay good attention to ensuring that clear links are made between current and previous learning.
89. Where lessons are well structured and tasks are tightly timed, the pace of lessons is brisk and purposeful and pupils know what is expected of them. Most teachers use well-considered questioning to test understanding and develop oral skills. However, there is evidence that some teachers do not use this strategy in order to encourage extended responses from pupils, relying instead on questions which require brief or one-word answers.
90. In most subjects, teachers plan well to develop learners' key skills as well as their skills in the key elements of the subjects concerned. Where appropriate, teachers use a good range of teaching strategies to encourage investigative approaches to learning. Most teachers have high expectations of success and behaviour for their pupils. Pupils are made well aware of these and most respond positively to the challenging tasks and activities provided.
91. Teachers and classroom learning assistants work well together. The co-operation between them provides valuable support to help pupils make appropriate progress.
92. Teachers help pupils consolidate and extend their learning by setting homework of challenge and interest. Homework tasks often encourage pupils to develop their investigative and creative skills.
93. Teachers make appropriate use of displays of pupils' work in classrooms and in some corridors and public areas. However, the wall space in most corridors and other areas is insufficiently well used to display work to help motivate pupils. Many teachers give generously of their time outside lessons to help individuals and to offer extra-curricular activities to extend pupils' learning and interest.
94. There is consistent implementation of the school's policy for equal opportunities. Pupils' social, educational, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds are considered to ensure progress. Good teaching practice to ensure the inclusion of pupils with behavioural and other difficulties is evident in many subjects.

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

95. Current procedures for assessing pupils' achievements are targeted for review and change in the SDP. The school has recognised that the quality of assessment of pupils' work is inconsistent across and within departments and that variations in approach lead to confusion for both pupils and parents.

96. There is some good practice in most departments in assessing end of unit tests and common tasks, but overall there is insufficient emphasis on developmental assessment strategies. Day-to-day assessment varies. Some teachers mark regularly and accurately and provide good feedback, but this is not reflected across the whole school. The objectives of most lessons observed were made known to pupils, but assessment methods and procedures were not always explained.
97. Good use is made of information supplied by the primary schools to group pupils, ensure continuity of support and inform all teachers of the capabilities of each pupil. The school tests regularly. It uses the information from these tests as well as the results of reading tests and KS2 and KS3 national tests to predict pupil achievement by the end of each key stage. This is good practice, but the information gained is insufficiently analysed, disseminated and used by teachers to identify underperformance. This is particularly so regarding the relative performance of boys and girls. Form tutors are insufficiently engaged in monitoring their pupils' achievement. There is departmental evaluation of targets and examination results as part of monitoring pupils' progress, but the process is not yet implemented with consistent rigour across the school.
98. Assessment procedures meet statutory requirements for the assessment and reporting of NC at the end of Y9. The requirements of examination boards are also satisfied.
99. Teachers regularly assess work, but written feedback varies widely in quality and usefulness. In day-to-day marking there is often insufficient use of written comment to indicate pupils' strengths and weaknesses and how they might improve. In all departments observed there is good oral feedback. Pupils' understanding of what they must do to improve is better developed in KS4 than in KS3. In only a minority of departments are assessments linked to levels of attainment at KS3.
100. The school keeps clear and systematic records to which parents have good access, and they receive full and interim reports each year. Information in the reports is often detailed and clear but there is inconsistent use of levels and grades. Regular meetings are used to inform parents of their children's progress and to elicit their support in combating underachievement. Parents of pupils with statements of SEN are fully involved in the review process.

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings.
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101. This grade confirms the school's own self-evaluation.

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

102. The curriculum overall meets the needs of all pupils and reflects the aims set out for pupils of statutory school age in the Education Act 1996. It is accessible for all pupils including those with SEN. Pupils have opportunities to obtain an appropriate range of qualifications. It is appropriately broad and balanced in each key stage. It provides effective continuity and progression between years and key stages.
103. The curriculum in KS3 meets the needs of the NC and religious education. French is the only modern foreign language taught in the key stage. All pupils study ICT throughout the key stage. Drama is only taught in the curriculum in Y7.
104. Pupils in KS4 continue to study a programme of optional subjects in addition to the statutory core subjects. At present there are no vocational courses in the optional programme and there is insufficient time to cover the Agreed Syllabus in religious education. A small group of pupils follow a well-designed alternative curriculum which assists their inclusion in the school.
105. The planning for the development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is satisfactory overall, ICT is underdeveloped. In a minority of schemes of work opportunities have been identified for pupils to develop basic and key skills.
106. All pupils are issued with a homework planner, but this is used effectively by a small minority of pupils. A significant number of pupils do not bring their planners to school and there is little evidence of planners being checked by subject or form teachers.
107. A good range of extra-curricular activities are available for all years. In addition to clubs that meet during the lunch hour and after school, there are visits off-site to places of interest, and to venues such as theatres and galleries. The school operates a successful Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. Pupils benefit from the range of activities available, which broadens their experiences and promote their personal and social development.
108. The school is generally successful in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

109. Pupils' spiritual awareness is successfully developed through daily acts of collective worship and in a number of subjects. However, there is no structured planning across the curriculum and there is inconsistency in the quality of experience in some tutor groups.
110. Moral development is promoted successfully through the school's emphasis on respect, consideration for others and responsible behaviour. Pupils are ready to undertake responsibilities and know that they are expected to be responsible for their own actions. They are outward looking and raise money for a number of charities and local good causes.
111. The relationships between the pupils themselves and with their teachers are good. They mix well socially and work together naturally across the age range. They are friendly, polite and ready to help each other and visitors to the school.
112. Cultural development is reflected in aspects of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities in a number of subjects. Pupils benefit from a range of experiences that are successful in developing their knowledge and understanding of cultures that are different from their own.
113. The school provides well-focused and helpful information for parents. Termly newsletters, information about the curriculum, pupil reports and the media group website provide effective channels of communication. There is a small but active PTA which is supplemented by other parents for fundraising events.
114. There is a mutually beneficial partnership with the community. The school sees itself as a community school and wants to further develop this ethos. Use is made of the school facilities by a Youth club and for rehearsals by a local theatre company and choir. Local residents are entertained in school productions and gain from the school going out into the community on many occasions during the year. Local enterprises provide good support for work related education and there is a strong link with the Youth Service and the Community Police Liaison Officer.
115. Well-established, constructive pastoral links with primary schools facilitate transfer from KS2 to KS3. Although there are some curricular links, this is an area identified for further development. Partnerships with secondary schools and further education colleges are good, which ensures that older pupils have a wide range of educational options as they leave KS4.
116. There are well-established links with providers of initial teacher training. Each year the school hosts up to five trainee teachers. Some of these have been appointed as full-time teachers.
117. In KS3 and KS4, the curriculum meets legal requirements with the exception of religious education in KS4. The provision for personal, health and social education, work-related education and careers education and guidance generally meet ACCAC guidelines. However, the scheme of work needs further

development to ensure that each area of experience is covered to the expected depth.

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

118. Good careers education and guidance is delivered by a professional careers adviser from Careers Wales. This is closely integrated with work related education in the personal social education (PSE) programme. Careers advice is introduced in Y7 with the main focus being provided in Y10 and 11. Y10 pupils undertake a well-monitored two week work experience placement. In the last academic year there was no evidence of pupils being debriefed and monitoring of employer's reports.
119. The school develops the bilingual competence of pupils by offering full course Welsh at KS4 to all pupils. Pupils further experience Welsh culture through a range of extra-curricular activities arranged in the main by the Welsh Department. These include a school eisteddfod, Urdd competitions and regular visits to national, cultural and sporting events.
120. Although Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig features in pupils' work in some subjects, there is no school policy to promote Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig neither has an audit been carried out. The school has begun to provide bilingual signs within the school, which is an area to be developed further.
121. The school is successful in offering a range of options for pupils with SEN and disaffected pupils. A combination of basic skill and vocational courses, together with partnerships with local colleges of further education, have helped to motivate pupils who had lost interest in school attendance.
122. Pupils' awareness and understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship are developed in several subject areas including English, geography and PSE. Although recycling, energy conservation and the environment are studied in various subjects, there are no school projects to emphasise their importance in our world. Schemes of work for food technology, PSE and science support healthy life-styles.
123. The Challenge of Industry days for Y11 pupils and visits to the school by speakers broaden and reinforce pupils' understanding of the workplace. Supported by informative collaboration from Careers Wales and employers who notify the school of vacancies in their workplace, teachers, parents and pupils are well acquainted with the needs of employers.
124. Good teaching strategies in many areas of the curriculum provide opportunities for pupils to develop problem solving and decision making skills. Outside lessons, these entrepreneurial skills are nurtured through activities such as the Dynamo Project and Challenge of Industry days.
125. The school is generally successful in ensuring that the majority of pupils acquire the appropriate knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to progress. They

are developing as independent learners and taking more responsibility for their own learning.

126. The breadth and quality of the curriculum ensures that the learning experiences reflect most national priorities and lay the foundation for lifelong learning.

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

Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings

127. This grade confirms the school's own self-evaluation.
128. The school is a civilised, caring and supportive community. Teachers have a thorough knowledge of the pupils. Pupils interviewed were appreciative of the support given by teachers and non-teaching staff. They felt secure and were confident that any problems such as bullying would be dealt with quickly.
129. The school has a clearly defined pastoral care system, managed well by two assistant headteachers. They have a clear understanding of their roles which include monitoring and guiding academic, personal and social development. The monitoring of academic progress is not as strong as the pastoral.
130. There is a good culture of partnership between home and school for the benefit of the pupils' education. The school's home-book is not always used effectively or regularly. There is an open door policy for parents, and pupils make their views known through the School Council.
131. Pastoral links with the primary feeder schools are good, although the curricular links are not as well developed. There are very good links with a number of further education colleges and the local sixth form college. Pupils with SEN benefit from these links as they do with the close links with a local special school.
132. The schemes of work for the school's PSE programme support and enhance the pastoral work, work experience, careers education, moral and social education. The programme meets the requirements of the ACCAC framework.
133. There is a very well structured and effective programme of careers education and guidance. The work of the Careers Wales adviser is well integrated into the school curriculum and pupils value the advice they receive. There is good information and advice for pupils and parents as pupils prepare to make important decisions in Y9 and 11.
134. The school emphasises the importance of ensuring good attendance for a successful education and operates an extensive attendance strategy to combat absenteeism. All who are concerned with attendance matters work diligently to monitor and encourage good attendance. However, the strategies used have so far produced negligible improvement.
135. The school policy on behaviour highlights the importance of pupils being responsible for their own actions. Parents are notified of unacceptable behaviour and invited to school. The school works hard to modify the behaviour of a very small minority of pupils with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. Good use is made of outside agencies and the behaviour of this group of pupils is generally well supported and managed.

136. Correct procedures are followed in the case of pupils excluded temporarily for unacceptable behaviour. Pupils know what is expected of them and consider the procedure a fair one. There was only one permanent exclusion in the year preceding the inspection. Overall the school's policy of early intervention and full parental involvement is effective.
137. The school's procedures for child protection meet statutory requirements. Staff and pupils are fully aware of the arrangements.
138. Procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety are good. There is an extensive security system and most health and safety issues are dealt with quickly. During the week of the inspection a couple of health and safety issues were reported to the headteacher.
139. A school nurse visits the school regularly and there is an adequate number of staff trained in first aid.

The quality and provision for additional learning needs

140. There is good provision for pupils with additional learning needs. Several appropriate strategies are used to meet the needs of these pupils.
141. Good information from the primary schools is successful in identifying pupils who need additional help when they transfer to the school. All these pupils have good individual educational plans (IEPs) that include relevant targets and strategies. The IEPs are shared with pupils, parents and subject teachers to ensure consistency of knowledge and expectations.
142. Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) provide good support for pupils and are a good link between the SEN department and mainstream teachers. They are sensitive to the needs of pupils, work closely with teachers and help pupils to make progress. Their work is monitored well by the SEN Co-ordinator although no formal time is allocated for the process.
143. The Learning Resource Centre is very well organised and provides a focus for SEN work. It has considerable expertise at its disposal and offers support to a wide range of pupils with SEN, including pupils who have complex educational or physical needs. Overall they are making good progress in all areas of learning.
144. Pupils who are withdrawn for extra help are making good progress in gaining their literacy skills and the vast majority are integrated back into all lessons in mainstream by the end of KS3. At the end of KS4 all SEN pupils gain a good range of accreditation in different courses, including GCSE.
145. The SEN Co-ordinator works closely together with senior staff and heads of house to ensure good support for pupils who have problems controlling their behaviour. Expectations are made clear to both pupils and parents, and for the most part the school is successful in supporting these pupils in the school environment.

146. The school provides appropriate training for all staff and the school is successful in creating a positive whole school approach to the education of pupils with SEN. Staff ensure that pupils with SEN are not treated less favourably than others.
147. The Code of Practice is administered effectively. There are very good links with outside agencies and the UA. Parents are regularly informed of pupils' progress and the vast majority attend their child's review meeting. Pupils who have their curriculum modified or disapplied have appropriate alternatives to meet their educational needs.
148. The SEN Co-ordinator offers very good guidance and is very well supported by the specialist teacher. The school has a caring and positive attitude towards pupils with SEN and is successful in meeting the needs of pupils with wide and complex needs. The SMT and the governors are supportive of the work and have responded to all the statutory requirements.

The quality of provision for equal opportunities

149. The school is mindful of its responsibility to cater for all pupils and to treat them equally. It has successfully created a climate where pupils are free from harassment and discrimination. Parents and pupils are confident that the school would respond promptly and effectively to such instances.
150. The school monitors the performance of boys and girls and there is no noticeable difference in achievement.
151. Pupils with complex physical and educational needs are able to access all relevant areas of the school and follow the mainstream curriculum. The school has responded to the recent statutory requirements regarding access to the building.
152. The curriculum successfully provides specific opportunities for pupils to learn about and discuss issues related to racism and human rights. The few pupils from ethnic minority groups are integrated naturally into the daily life of the school.
153. The school's policy and procedures for dealing with oppressive behaviour are well understood and very effectively implemented. A number of KS4 pupils have been trained in counselling and they play an important role in dealing with incidents when they occur.
154. The steps taken by the school have been very successful in ensuring that no pupil suffers from less favourable treatment than others.
155. A very good range of successful strategies is used to support pupils if they experience difficulty in school. The leadership team is very supportive and active in ensuring a caring atmosphere where pupils are valued as individuals.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

156. This grade confirms the school's own self-evaluation.
157. The school has clear published aims and associated values which are displayed throughout the school and understood by all. These encapsulate respect for the individual, to enable fulfilment of potential and to gain the widest possible range of skills and knowledge, including knowledge of society and community. An appropriate range of effective policies and procedures to embrace and facilitate this philosophy is in place, although ensuring the consistent application of policies and procedures is underdeveloped.
158. The headteacher and senior managers provide effective leadership. They have a thorough understanding of the school's many strengths and with the benefits of insight and determination provided by the new headteacher, there is now an awareness of areas for development and to exploit potential. Pupils and staff are well known and respected.
159. Higher expectations for the school's future are being successfully nurtured, and disseminated, the tangible outcomes of which are already being commented on within the school and community.
160. There are appropriate and effective policies and procedures to encourage racial equality. Statutory requirements in respect of disability and looked after children are well met in the school's clearly supportive environment.
161. Proper account is taken of published WAG priorities and guidance provided by other organisations. Current restructuring of middle management is strengthening links and continuity with partner primary schools.
162. The school has gained several national awards and has membership of a number of environmental and community organisations.
163. There are healthy links with Wrexham UA. Links with external providers and local and environmental organisations are good. These links provide valuable opportunities, experiences and insights to the world of work. Links with post-16 providers are well established and rationalisation of senior staff roles is increasing this emphasis.
164. The climate of professional accountability is becoming more formalised through departmental target setting and follow up interviews with the headteacher and linked senior staff, focused upon raising standards and the priorities identified in the school development plan.

165. The school has good procedures to identify whole-school, departmental and individual training needs. Appropriate leadership training to develop the consistency of middle managers is rightly identified. Those concerned report that they have benefited from induction and mentoring arrangements to support teachers who join the school.
166. The governing body is knowledgeable, effective and supportive, with individual governors bringing a wide range of expertise and ability. Governors understand their roles within the school and are involved in strategic planning. They meet regularly, are attached to subjects, aspects and areas of the school, and are well informed about the progress of the school and influences affecting its performance
167. The governing body meets the legal requirements placed upon it, ensuring satisfactory standards of provision for pupils. The prospectus, governors' annual report to parents and home to school agreement meet WAG requirements.
168. Most school policies have not been reviewed recently. The headteacher is aware of this. Updating of the wide range policies is to take place in the light of proposed changes to the school's staffing structure.

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

169. This grade corresponds with the school's own self-evaluation.

How effectively the provider's performance is monitored and evaluated

170. The school's self-evaluation report honestly, realistically and accurately addresses the seven key questions of the new common inspection framework. The review was put together by the previous headteacher and usefully updated by the new headteacher to add her perceptions of strengths, priorities and areas for development. This proved a valuable exercise for all concerned. An overall judgement was made and each key question was graded. The report findings of the inspection team closely match those of the school's self-evaluation report.
171. The school makes use of appropriate data. Senior staff and most middle managers are aware of the performance of subjects and aspects for which they are responsible. There is knowledge of benchmarking for departments but insufficient use is made to use information to set specific targets or to involve individual pupils. Appropriate targets are agreed with the involvement of the UA.
172. There is an increasingly well organised system of evaluation which involves regular sessions of middle managers with the headteacher, to a common agenda. Each member of the leadership team has liaison responsibilities for a cluster of departments. These common activities are leading to clarification and coherence of purpose.
173. Numbers of staff are routinely involved in dialogue and in establishing and developing initiatives across the school. This strategy is to be encouraged to increase awareness and to disseminate best practice, for instance, in literacy, numeracy and preferred teaching and learning styles.
174. Governing body sub-committees review progress. Governors are linked to departments. Pupils' views are valued. The school council is a valuable means of debate and communication. Pupils who were interviewed expressed satisfaction. Parents find the school increasingly approachable, encourages their involvement and responds positively to their points of view.

The effectiveness of planning for improvement

175. The current self-evaluation review and quality development statement provide a good starting point for departmental self-review and development, which are at a very early stage.
176. The SDP covers seven headings which appropriately focus on school improvement. The plans identify suitable priorities and include objectives, those

involved, tasks and resources. They give time scales and success criteria but lack clearly defined measurable targets linked to detailed costing. Departmental development plans link closely to the whole-school plans and follow a standard pattern, although several lack detail.

177. Although the budget increasingly leaves little room for manoeuvre, careful housekeeping ensures that priorities are equitably financed. Although self-evaluation and development planning have led to measurable improvements in a number of areas, the culture is still at a relatively early stage of development. Leadership has a clear vision and overview for the school's direction. Self-evaluation has only recently begun to permeate all areas and aspects of the school effectively, by fitting into the school's planning cycle and becoming integral to practice. It is developing further and is becoming instrumental in driving the school forward.
178. The school has made generally good progress in addressing most of the key issues identified for action in the previous report. Results in external tests and examinations have improved considerably. Boys' achievement has improved in a number of areas in response to targeted initiatives. There has been an improvement, albeit only very slight, in pupils' attendance although this is still unsatisfactory. The responsibilities and structure of senior management, have been and are at present further being reconsidered, the better to secure effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of school policies and to respond to current priorities. Steps were quickly taken to meet shortcomings in identified statutory requirements, including collective acts of worship. Shortcomings in ICT provision have been largely met. All staff have received training in the use and implications of ICT. Provision is monitored. The school awaits the imminent replacement and upgrading of its out-dated and inadequate ICT resources.

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

Grade 3: good features outweigh shortcomings

179. This grade is in agreement with the school's own self-evaluation.

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

180. The school has enough well qualified, experienced teaching staff to meet the needs of the curriculum in almost all areas. Many teachers have been in post for a long time and have a real commitment to the school. This is well balanced by the presence of recently appointed staff in some subjects. The pupil teacher ratio is 15.3:1 which is in line with the national average.
181. Teachers have good knowledge and expertise in their subjects. In the few areas where non-specialists teach, every effort is made to ensure that the subject is the teacher's second specialism. However, the school does not have a specialist ICT teacher, which is a cause of weakness in this area.
182. There are enough appropriately skilled non-teaching staff to enable the day-to-day life of the school to function effectively. The school has an administrative officer and two clerical assistants who ensure that the reception and office areas run efficiently. There is also a librarian, a resource assistant and a laboratory technician and two caretakers, all of whom contribute effectively to the running of the school. However, the lack of a DT technician creates a deficiency and potential complications in this area.
183. The ten support staff who assist pupils with special educational and behavioural needs are well trained, are well integrated in to the life of the school, and support the pupils well. However, an even greater involvement of the support staff in the planning and teaching of lessons would enhance effectiveness.
184. The provision for learning resources is mainly inadequate. Departmental capitation, whilst fairly distributed, is low, resulting in some shortages of books and equipment in most subjects. Of the subjects inspected, RE is poorly resourced for both books and equipment. As at the time of the last inspection, the library is well resourced and pupils appreciate the quality of the service provided for them.
185. Numbers of computers are lower than average, old and prone to break down. Subjects requiring specialist ICT facilities and software, such as art and science, are short of these. The school has prioritised the need for increased computer resources in its SDP and looks forward to an early improvement. Currently the school has three electronic white boards, but at present only in DT is this equipment used effectively.

186. There are enough rooms for the number of pupils on roll. In most subjects the classrooms have been enlivened with displays of pupils' work to provide attractive learning environments. A lift provides access to all areas for physically disabled pupils. However, there are serious shortcomings in accommodation. There is inadequate storage space for PE equipment. The heat treatment area in DT has been condemned so cannot be used. Ventilation in the food technology rooms is inadequate. There is no indoor recreation space for pupils. The library, although well stocked and attractively presented, is small. There is no school hall. The acoustics and environment of the sports hall make it inappropriate to use for assemblies. The toilet facilities and changing rooms are inadequate.
187. The school is clean. There is very little graffiti or litter. However, the school buildings have not been well maintained. Many corridors and stairwells provide a depressing environment, are in poor repair and are in need of re-decoration. Few have displays of pupils' work or of other materials. The lighting on the lower corridors is poor. The floors and walls of many classrooms are also in poor repair and much of the furniture is in poor condition. A number of fire doors do not close properly so they are ineffective.
188. The school occupies a large site. There are extensive playing fields although there is no all weather pitch. The security of the site is compromised by a public footpath that runs through it. Some of the grounds have not been well maintained.

How efficiently resources are managed to achieve value for money.

189. The school manages its budget effectively, although over time there has been a lack of provision for a programme of continuous improvement to the buildings,
190. The new headteacher has a clear view of the priorities for development of the school. Major improvement in the provision for ICT is essential to meet statutory requirements and WAG targets. The buildings need significant improvement to provide a stimulating learning environment, to enhance pupils' self-esteem and improve their behaviour. Governors support these developments. With the headteacher, they are seeking costings and sources of funding for these and other developments from the UA.
191. The headteacher, with the leadership group, works with the governing body to draw up the annual budget. This is monitored by the governors' finance committee. Expenditure is not well enough reviewed and evaluated.
192. Teachers are deployed to good effect but leadership for ICT is unsatisfactory. Procedures to provide professional development for all staff are well organised and effective. The leadership group reviews the curriculum and its associated staffing and resource needs each year. This process is not rigorous enough to bring about necessary improvements.
193. The school achieves satisfactory value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Science

Key Stage 3: Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings.
Key Stage 4: Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings.

Good features

KS3

194. A majority of pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of a wide range of topics covering all aspects of the NC.
195. Most pupils recall key concepts and ideas well, and apply them to a range of problems and applications in both familiar and unfamiliar situations.
196. The majority of pupils have a good understanding of the link between scientific principles and applications associated with environmental and healthy living issues.
197. The majority of pupils use scientific terms accurately in their descriptions and problem solving activities.
198. Pupils with SEN make good progress and benefit from the support provided.
199. A vast majority of pupils work safely and collaborate well during practical work.
200. With a small majority of pupils, problem-solving skills are well developed when they are given the opportunity. Many are good listeners and contribute well to class discussions.

KS4

201. More able and a minority of average ability pupils have a good understanding of the more complex principles developed in the key stage in life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.
202. They have a good recall of previous work and can apply their knowledge to a range of problems, including issues related to health, the environment and sustainable development.
203. SEN pupils make good progress relative to their ability.
204. The quality of investigations is good for the majority of pupils.
205. Pupils apply their scientific knowledge and understanding well in the planning process. Some record their preliminary observations. Actual measurements are systematically recorded by the majority of pupils.

206. They are able to communicate their understanding of scientific concepts using graphs, assess the validity of their findings, understand how errors occur in experimental work and how they can be reduced.

Shortcomings

KS3

207. A minority of average and lower ability pupils have an insecure understanding of current and previous work.
208. They sometimes have difficulty in applying scientific principles to a range of tasks and applications related to everyday applications of science.
209. Investigative skills are not sufficiently developed during the key stage.

KS4

210. A significant number of average and lower ability pupils make only satisfactory progress. These pupils have a less secure recall of previous work and key concepts and this restricts progress.
211. The progress of many of these pupils is hindered by a lack of commitment to complete assignments for homework and by irregular patterns of attendance.
212. A minority of pupils underachieve in module tests and end of course examinations.
213. For a minority of pupils, the quality of investigations is satisfactory with a number of these pupils failing to achieve expected levels in the skill areas of planning, analysing and evaluating.

Welsh second language

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|---------------------|---------|--|
| Key Stage 3: | Grade 2 | Good features and no important shortcomings. |
| Key Stage 4: | Grade 2 | Good features and no important shortcomings. |

Good features

KS3

214. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and pupils have a positive attitude to Welsh.
215. Pupils make good progress in the skill of listening within the key stage. Pupils are always co-operative and they listen well to their teachers. They listen to short items and respond well using basic sentence patterns with a fair degree of confidence.
216. In paired and group tasks they work well, listening to each other and answering questions and other points confidently. The abler pupils expand on their answers linking sentences together effectively.

217. Pupils speak well. More able pupils speak confidently and accurately. In group work they initiate conversation, showing awareness of sequence and progression and changing the person of the verb appropriately. More able pupils report fluently as individuals to the whole class.
218. All pupils express opinions well. Average and lower ability groups give simple set reasons when asked for opinions. More able groups expand on their answers giving reasons and examples to support their views.
219. Pupils within the key stage mainly use a range of basic constructions, vocabulary and verb forms correctly. The more able pupils use a wide range of constructions and tenses and a good variety of vocabulary and phrases correctly.
220. Pupils read aloud confidently and interestedly in class. They read their own work and other short passages well, with good pronunciation across the ability range.
221. They understand short passages on familiar topics and respond well by answering questions orally and in writing.
222. Most pupils, write well in response to a variety of stimuli. They write letters, dialogues and descriptive passages using familiar patterns mainly correctly, and varying person and tense to good effect.
223. The standards of accuracy and punctuation of more able pupils are good. They use constructions learnt earlier quite well.

KS4

224. Virtually all pupils are entered for the Full Course GCSE. Results have steadily improved over the last three years and are now well above national averages.
225. Pupils make good progress within the key stage and most show an understanding of spoken Welsh in range of situations. They complete realistic oral and written tasks well.
226. They work well in groups to complete tasks, express opinions and use evidence. More able pupils discuss ambitious topics. They contribute well to group discussions, drawing on their own experiences and producing a wide range of evidence to back up their standpoint and link sentences together effectively to produce extended spontaneous contributions.
227. Most pupils read to a good standard. Reading expression is clear and meaningful. Pupils show good understanding of a range of material and respond well in oral and written work.
228. The more able pupils entered for the higher tier read difficult passages from a variety of sources and respond well orally and in writing.
229. Most pupils use a range of basic constructions and tenses correctly in tasks for their GCSE folio work. The more able pupils respond to the more challenging GCSE topics well and produce a good standard of course work both as a

response to reading material and to other audio visual stimuli from the 'Llun a Llyn' category.

230. They write with a good degree of accuracy. When expressing opinions they structure their arguments well, supporting them with evidence from their own experience.

Shortcomings

KS3 and KS4

231. Middle and lower ability pupils make basic grammatical and punctuation errors when writing extended passages when the focus is not on grammar. A number of these errors are repeated later in their work.
232. Most pupils do not read independently from a sufficiently wide range of challenging materials. They do not respond to stories by expressing opinions about the stories or discussing the content and characters.

Design technology

Key Stage 3 Grade 3 Good features outweigh shortcomings

Key Stage 4 Grade 2 Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

KS3

233. Pupils' making skills are good in an appropriately wide range of materials. Pupils plan well for making, work accurately and have a sound understanding of making techniques. They use equipment confidently.
234. Pupils use ICT well to record and present information. They confidently design and make using CAD/CAM equipment, particularly so in Y8 where pupils design and make fridge magnets.
235. Understanding and application of control principles are sound. Most pupils understand the circuits they build and have a basic understanding of the components they use. Pupils understand the principles of simple mechanisms and structures.
236. Lower ability pupils and pupils with SEN make good progress.

KS4

237. Standards are good in GCSE Food Technology, Resistant Materials and Product Design.
238. Pupils understand and apply a design process in their project work. They research well, construct appropriate specifications for their designs and understand the link between design specifications and evaluations.

- 239. Presentation skills are good. Pupils use ICT design packages effectively to enhance the presentation of their work. ICT is also used well for word processing, research on the Internet and, where appropriate, CAD/CAM.
- 240. Product disassembly is used effectively in food technology to evaluate the nutritional content and value for money of commercially produced dishes.
- 241. Making skills are well developed. Pupils plan well for making, accurately and creatively use a wide variety of materials and finish their work well.

Shortcomings

KS3

- 242. Many pupils do not have a sound understanding of a design process and do not fully implement its stages whilst designing and making their projects. They do not understand the link between a design specification and evaluation. Quick developmental drawing skills are underdeveloped.
- 243. Pupils' understanding of the properties and uses of the materials they employ varies across modules. It is weaker in resistant materials than in food and textiles.
- 244. Limited designing opportunities in most modules results in more able pupils being insufficiently challenged.

KS4

- 245. Quick developmental drawing skills are less well developed than other aspects of designing.
- 246. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties are underdeveloped in resistant materials.

History

Key Stage 3	Grade 3	Good features outweigh shortcomings
Key Stage 4	Grade 3	Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

KS3 and KS4

- 247. KS3 pupils have secure levels of background factual knowledge and understanding of chronology; most recall their learning successfully. Most pupils achieve good standards in applying and organising this information to tackle challenging historical problems.
- 248. From Y7 most pupils adopt sound investigative approaches in examining historical problems. They use a variety of sources of evidence effectively to compare and contrast differing interpretations of historical events, and provide convincing explanations of the causes of change occurring over time.

249. By the end of KS3, above average and average ability pupils become increasingly confident in testing their sources of evidence for bias, reliability and usefulness. They evaluate the sources effectively and use them to develop well balanced arguments.
250. By Y9, pupils make good progress in distinguishing between long-term and short-term causes of change, for instance in their work on industrial and social changes in Wales and England in the 18th and 19th centuries.
251. Less able pupils make appropriate progress because of the carefully adapted work with which they are provided. Most pupils achieve secure standards in selecting, organising and communicating information through a range of writing tasks and challenges in which they use a good range of historical vocabulary.
252. KS4, pupils successfully build upon the historical and key skills acquired in KS3, demonstrating a growing maturity in the depth of their response to tasks and challenges. Most provide reasonable and convincing explanations for the motivation and attitudes of people in the past by asking more complex questions of the sources.
253. Above average and average ability pupils achieve sound standards in identifying and explaining the major turning points which occurred in the history of medicine over time. Their learning is well recorded in notes, essays and concept maps.
254. Most pupils produce well organised and well presented written work, often using the word processing and research facilities of computer resources. Some examples of coursework were thoughtful, well planned and presented clearly argued and persuasive points of view.
255. Pupils make effective use of the local and national environment to extend their knowledge and understanding of the particular historical and cultural development of Wales. KS4 pupils make secure progress in applying their knowledge and understanding from other curricular areas to raise their standards and to extend their problem-solving and research skills.

Shortcomings

256. A minority of pupils, especially in KS3, do not regularly complete their written tasks in order to fully record their learning. The written responses by a minority of pupils in both key stages lack adequate depth and detail to fully develop and explain the points which they seek to make. Some written work is carelessly presented.
257. A significant number of pupils lack the confidence to provide extended and fluent responses to questioning in the classroom; they are over-reliant upon brief factual responses in their oral work.

Physical education

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

Good features

KS3 and KS4

258. Most pupils in KS3 and KS4 respond enthusiastically, are attentive and enjoy participating in the different activities offered.
259. All pupils in KS3 and KS4 are safety conscious, and equipment is handled correctly and is treated with care.
260. Most pupils have a good understanding of the effects of exercise on the body, including safe warm up and cool down.
261. KS3 pupils make good progress as a result of carefully structured and well-planned lessons.
262. KS3 pupils respond well to the question and answer section at the beginning and end of every lesson.
263. Very good standards are achieved in boys' gymnastics where pupils are able to plan, perform and refine routines both on the floor and using apparatus.
264. In KS3 invasion games, most boys and more able girls have good ball handling skills and overall have a good understanding of the game.
265. In Y11 GCSE girls' badminton, pupils perform basic forehand and backhand skills well.
266. Most pupils work physically hard throughout the lesson.
267. Y9 and 10 boys produce very good work in trampolining. They maintain very good height, body tension and control when performing set sequences. They know how to improve their work and use correct technical terminology to analyse performances.
268. In KS4 invasion games, a number of boys and more able girls show good levels of skill and tactical awareness.
269. GCSE A*-C results in 2004 were above UA and national averages.

Shortcomings

KS3 & KS4

270. In KS4 invasion games, a small minority of pupils cannot maintain the appropriate skill level when under pressure.
271. GCSE, Y11 pupils do not relate the theory aspect of the course to the practical activity and do not provide extended answers.

Extracurricular activities

272. The provision of extracurricular activities is good and all pupils have the opportunity to attend. The department has secured extra funding through various grants in recent years and as a result offer off site outdoor education activities together with the more traditional inter-school games fixtures. The standard of gymnastics in the club is very good.

Religious education

- Key Stage 3** Grade 2 good features and no important shortcomings
Key Stage 4 Grade 4 some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

Good features

KS3

273. Pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of the units of work they have studied, which reflect the locally agreed syllabus.
274. Pupils understand the importance of symbolism in religion. They are able to explain, for example, the significance of light as a symbol and appreciate that it is important in more than one of the principal world religions.
275. Pupils are able to draw on their own experiences and apply them appropriately, for example, using their experiences of eating together to understand a special meal in the Sikh religion.
276. Pupils are able to explain and discuss concepts, such as justice, and relate them to that of significant people in recent times, such as Oscar Romero. They are able to relate religious teaching to contemporary issues such as using the teaching of the ten commandments to discuss questions relating to the sanctity of life.
277. Pupils develop a respectful attitude to the beliefs and practices of other people and are aware of the importance of tolerance. They are able to engage well in empathy exercises.
278. Pupils across the ability range respond well in brain storming sessions and in class discussion. Able pupils produce mature answers orally and in writing. Less able pupils make good progress in relation to their ability.

279. Some pupils are able to produce extended written work, sometimes using ICT, on topics such as the Guru Granth Sahib.

KS4

280. Pupils have an understanding of some of the current religious, moral and social issues and are able to present arguments, for example, relating to the sanctity of life such as euthanasia. They have a good grasp of the importance of key twentieth century figures such as Martin Luther King.

281. They acquire a knowledge and understanding of their own religious heritage by studying the key figures of the Welsh revival.

Shortcomings

KS3

282. A minority of pupils do not give extended answers either orally or in writing.

KS4

283. The time allocated to the subject in KS4 is such that pupils are not able to engage with any topic for very long. They are unable to make any kind of in-depth study or maintain continuity and progression. Some pupils adopt a very negative attitude to the subject.

School's response to the inspection

284. The inspection findings recognise that, in most respects, we have maintained high standards since our last inspection and are improving standards in areas such as religious education and ICT. We are very pleased that the inspectors observed the following:

- The pupils' attitudes to learning, the interest they show in their work and their ability to engage in the learning environment are commendable features of the school.
- The care and support systems we have in place which underpin our curricular provision are appropriate and effective.
- The staff are skilled, committed and are expert in their respective fields.

285. It is particularly pleasing that the report confirms that we are achieving our aim to make our school a happy and secure place in which pupils grow in confidence and have opportunities to realise their potential.

286. An action plan will be put in place to address the recommendations in the report. We believe we can confidently address all aspects and have already begun doing so as part of our strategy for improvement. Staff and governors are

already addressing the health and safety issues identified by inspectors in the report.

287. Where it is possible to do, staff and governors will address the recommendations before the end of the school year. Continuing to raise standards of pupil achievement will be a major priority for us and we will provide more opportunities for staff to improve their knowledge and skills. Inspectors pleasingly identified many elements and procedures in the school that will help us minimise any shortcomings by sharing good practice more widely.
288. A copy of the school's action plan in response to the inspection recommendations will be sent to all parents. The governors' annual report to parents will report on the progress we are making on the inspection recommendations.
289. The headteacher, staff, governing body and pupils would like to thank all members of the inspection team for both the degree of professionalism and consideration shown during the week. The school feels that the inspection was conducted in a spirit of partnership and that the shared mandate will provide a framework for further improvement.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Y Grango
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	11 – 16
Address of school	Allt Ty Gwyn Rhosllanerchrugog Wrexham
Post-code	LL14 1EL
Telephone number	01978 840082

Headteacher	Mrs Karen Lloyd Evans
Date of appointment	September 2004
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr Brian Jones
Reporting inspector	Mr J Emlyn James
Dates of inspection	8 th – 11 th November 2004

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	56	88	97	102	115	-	-	-	458

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	31	0	31

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	14.12
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	n/a
Average teaching group size	19.8
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	76.69

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole School
Term 1	92.6	89.5	88.8	87.9	90.5	-	-	89.7
Term 2	92	89.6	86.1	85.7	88.9	-	-	88.3
Term 3	87.6	85.8	82.7	82.4	92.2	-	-	85.9

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	17%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	60 temporary 1 permanent

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 3:

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results: 2004														
Total number of pupils in Y9: 102														
Percentage of pupils at each level														
		D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP
English	Teacher assessment	School	1		0	2	7	5	30	30	19	4		
		National	0	1	1	0	2	9	22	34	22	9		
	Test	School	0	7	2	0		7	26	29	20	3		
		National	0	3	2	0	0	0	8	21	31	23	10	
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School	4	0	0	0		31	30	25	5	3		
		National												
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School				1	6	16	15	28	26	7		
		National	0	1	0	0	1	8	2	55	29	14		
	Test	School	0	8	1	0		13	13	21	33	6		
		National	0	5	1	0	0	0	7	19	21	32	14	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	1			1	1	10	25	42	16	3		
		National	0	1	0	0	1	8	21	32	25	11		
	Test	School	7	8	1	0		6	20	36	15	7		
		National	0	4	1		0	0	6	19	31	25	14	

D Pupils exempted 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	47.1	In the school	40.3
In Wales	56	In Wales	57

Public Examination Results:

For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ	
Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2004	112
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	36

The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2004:	School	UA	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	91	85	87
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	42	44	51
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	89	83	85
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	29	32	38
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	96	99	97
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	97	97	75
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G C or the vocational qualification equivalent	95	89	93
attained no graded GCSE C or the vocational qualification equivalent	5	11	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	2	6	3

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

The school was inspected by a team of thirteen inspectors who spent 38 inspection days in school collecting evidence, covering all subjects and curriculum areas. Inspectors observed 101 lessons in full or in part. All teachers present were seen teaching, most on a number of occasions, especially in the six subjects reported on. Planned discussions were held with the majority of teachers, including members of the leadership team, subject coordinators, heads of departments, pastoral staff, with non-teaching staff and a range of members of the local community, and with professional and visiting agencies to the school. The registered inspector met staff some weeks ahead of the inspection. In a meeting with the registered inspector, members of the governing body discussed their role in action which had been taken since the last inspection and their views on the seven key questions.

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

The school helpfully provided a range of informative documentation which was analysed before and during the inspection. The inspection team carefully considered written contributions and responses made by 116 parents to questionnaires distributed before the inspection and the comments by 9 parents at the pre-inspection meeting conducted by the registered inspector.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team Member	Responsibilities
J E James Registered Inspector	Context, summary, recommendations, appendices, key questions 1, 5, 6, 7
R Cawthorne Lay inspector	Contributions to key questions 1, 3, 5
S G Davies Core team	Science, key question 3
H Evans Core team	Key question 4 and contributions to key questions 1,3
S I Gale Core team	Design technology, key questions 2 and 7 and contribution to key question 1
L Bithell	Contributions to key questions 1, 4
A V Edwards	Contributions to key questions 1, 3
D Jones	Science, biology
T Lewis	Welsh, contributions to key questions 1, 3
A Newman	History, key question 2
G Owens	Religious education, contribution to key question 7
P Rourke	Contributions to key question 7
P Thomas	Physical education
P Phillips	School nominee

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Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, the headteacher, all the staff and the pupils of Ysgol Y Grango for their courtesy and co-operation during the inspection.