

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

**Lewis School Pengam
Gilfach,
Bargoed
CF81 8LJ**

School Number: 6764075

Date of Inspection: 16/01/06

by

**Peter Guy Carter
16926**

Date of Publication: 20TH March 2006

Under Estyn contract number: 1202705

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

- * nursery schools and settings maintained or used by local education authorities (LEAs);
- * primary schools;
- * secondary schools;
- * special schools;
- * pupil referral units;
- * independent schools;
- * further education;
- * adult and community-based learning;
- * youth support services;
- * LEAs;
- * teacher education and training;
- * work-based learning;
- * careers companies; and
- * the education, guidance and training elements of Jobcentre Plus.

Estyn also:

- * provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
- * makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

Every possible care has been taken to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of going to press. Any enquiries or comments regarding this document/publication should be addressed to:

Publication Section

Estyn

Anchor Court

Keen Road

Cardiff

CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gsi.gov.uk

This and other Estyn publications are available on our website: www.estyn.gov.uk

© Crown Copyright 2006 This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.

Copies of this report are available from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide copies of the report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the cost of reproduction may be made to others requesting a copy of the report.

Lewis School Pengam was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose of inspection is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents information about the performance of their child's school.

The inspection of Lewis School Pengam took place between 16/01/06 and 20/01/06. An independent team of inspectors, led by Peter Guy Carter undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

The team was required to report on the standards achieved by pupils, the quality of education provided by the school, the quality of leadership and management and the contribution made by the school to its pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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

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

"There are three types of inspection.

For **all** inspections, there is a written report on seven key questions.

For **short** inspections, there are no subject reports.

For **standard** inspections, there are also reports on six subjects.

For **full** inspections, there are also reports on all subjects.

Estyn decides the kind of inspection that a school receives, mainly on the basis of its past performance. Most schools receive a standard inspection. All special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a standard inspection."

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

Contents	Page
Context	6
Summary	7
Recommendations	16
Standards	17
Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?	17
The quality of education and training	22
Key question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	22
Key question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	26
Key question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	29
Leadership and management	32
Key question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	32
Key question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	34
Key question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	37
Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning	39
English	39
Science	42
Information technology	43
Modern foreign languages	45
Geography	47
Religious education (including religious studies)	49
School's response to the inspection	51
Appendices	52
A Basic information about the school	52
B School data and indicators	52
C National Curriculum assessments results	53
D Evidence base of the inspection	55
E Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	56

Context

The nature of the provider

1. Lewis School Pengam is an 11-18 community school in the Caerphilly County Borough Council unitary authority (UA). There are 1,006 pupils and students on roll including 118 in the sixth form. There were 862 on roll including 98 in the sixth form at the time of the last inspection in 2000. All of the pupils in KS3 and KS4 are boys. Girls are admitted to the sixth form. At present there are three in Y12 and two in Y13. In addition a small number of girls are taught in sixth form classes as a result of partnership arrangements with other local providers.
2. The school is on a single site and accommodated in a new building completed in 2002. The new building was financed through a Private Funding Initiative (PFI). At the time of the previous inspection the school was on two sites which were three miles apart.
3. The school serves an area of established housing in former colliery villages but also draws some pupils from further away. The school's intake represents the full range of ability. Pupils, on entry, are below the local and national attainment norms on average, as a consequence of the social and economic background and the all-boys intake. Unemployment is high and low-wage occupation prevalent.
4. The proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals is 17% which is a little above the national average of 15.7% but below the local average of 18%. Data produced for the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) in 2005 indicate that a significant part of the school's catchment area is amongst the most disadvantaged in Wales. The school's free school meals index does not reflect the social and economic status of the area it serves.
5. Thirty-seven pupils have statements of special educational needs (SEN) and 114 pupils are registered as needing additional support.
6. The very large majority of pupils and students is of white European heritage and speaks English as their first language. Welsh is taught as a second language to all pupils. Less than two per cent of pupils come from an ethnic minority background. Two pupils receive support teaching in English as an additional language.
7. Significant changes to the school since the last inspection include:
 - the move into new accommodation on a single site;
 - an increase in the size of the senior management team which now consists of the headteacher, two deputy headteachers and three assistant headteachers; and
 - the development of partnerships with Rhymney Comprehensive School, Lewis Girls' School and Ystrad Mynach College to enhance provision for education in the sixth form.

The school's priorities and targets

8. The school has as its aims 'Achievement, Care and Excellence'. In addition a particular focus has been made recently on the concept that 'Every Person in Our School Matters' to reflect the school's commitment to being inclusive.
9. The school's priorities for development, set out in the current School Development Plan (SDP) are:
 - working with and within the UA to develop collaborative partnerships with other providers for the education of pupils and students aged 14-19;
 - the attainment and assessment of pupils aged 11-16;
 - care, control and inclusion (including improving attendance);
 - workload remodelling;
 - the development of personal learning pathways; and
 - sustainability.

Summary

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.

10. Lewis School Pengam is a very good school with many outstanding features. It has made significant and continuous progress in the last four years. The great majority of teachers, other members of staff, pupils and students work hard to achieve the school's three aims of achievement, care and excellence within an environment where every person matters.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

11. The inspection team inspected the standards that pupils and students achieve in six areas of the curriculum.

Standards in subjects inspected			
Subject	KS3	KS4	Sixth Form
English	1	2	2
Science	3	3	3
Information technology	2	3	3
Modern foreign languages	1	1	2
Geography	2	2	2
Religious education	2	3	-

12. The following table shows the standards achieved by pupils and students at different key stages in the subjects inspected.

(80 lessons)	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	15%	57%	25%	3%	0%
KS4	11%	48%	30%	11%	0%
KS3 + KS4	13%	54%	27%	6%	0%
Sixth Form	0%	85%	15%	0%	0%
Whole School	11%	59%	25%	5%	0%

KS3 and KS4

13. The figures in the table above fall a little short of the national target for 2007 which is for 98% of standards to be graded one, two or three. They exceed the national target for 65% to be graded one or two. It should be noted that these targets refer to all schools, not only boys' schools.
14. In most subjects pupils generally achieve standards that match or exceed their agreed learning goals. There are no significant barriers to learning. All pupils have appropriate opportunities to achieve well, whatever their background or ability.
15. Pupils with additional learning needs receive very good and, in some cases, outstanding support and generally achieve good standards.
16. Attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at the end of KS3 has improved since the last inspection. Results in English and mathematics are better than those in science.
17. The most recent KS3 test results in English are significantly higher than the average for boys locally and nationally. Those for mathematics exceed the local average and equal the national average. Results in science match the local average but are below the national average.

18. The number of pupils who achieved level five in each core subject is significantly higher than the local average and a little above the national average. When considered within the context of the school these results represent significant achievement.
19. Results in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations have also improved significantly since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils achieving five or more A*-C grades is below the average for schools with a similar but mixed gender intake. For pupils achieving five or more A*-G grades results are very close to the average for similar schools. Normally, boys do not perform as well as girls at this stage. These figures are therefore, evidence of notable achievement.
20. The number of pupils who achieved grade C or above in each of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science matches the average for similar but mixed schools.
21. Pupils' communication, numerical and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are generally good with no important shortcomings across the curriculum. Particularly good progress has been made in the development of writing and ICT skills.
22. All pupils study Welsh as a second language. Bilingualism is promoted through signs in Welsh and Welsh language displays around the school. The Welsh language is used incidentally by some teachers and this helps pupils develop their bilingual competence to a level which is at least satisfactory.
23. Across the curriculum pupils generally make good progress, whatever their ability. The great majority are well motivated in lessons and respond positively to the tasks set. Most show high levels of interest in their work and in the progress they are making.
24. Rates of attendance are steadily improving. Attendance has been a special focus for development and action. The progress made in improving attendance is a good feature of the school's performance. Attendance during the last year is similar to the local average but below the national target of 92%.
25. A small minority of pupils, mainly in KS4, finds some difficulty in meeting expectations about their behaviour, attendance and standards of work.
26. Many teachers encourage pupils to develop the confidence to adopt more independent approaches to learning. Pupils develop problem-solving and decision-making skills. Most work well, both individually and in collaboration with others.
27. The personal and social education (PSE) programme helps pupils develop skills to work independently and acquire positive attitudes to life-long learning.
28. Pupils make good use of the varied opportunities provided to help their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. They show awareness and respect for

different lifestyles, beliefs and cultures. Some good assemblies enhance their understanding.

29. The behaviour of most pupils is good, both in lessons and around the school. A small minority of pupils in KS4 occasionally seeks to disturb some lessons but the majority tends to dissociate themselves from any disruption.

Sixth form

30. Students in the sixth form achieved standards that are predominantly good with no important shortcomings in lessons observed during the inspection.
31. Standards of attainment at advanced level have improved significantly since the last inspection. Sixty-three per cent of students who were entered for two or more subjects achieved grades A to C compared to 53% locally and 34% in the school at the time of the last inspection. The proportion who achieved two or more grades A to E exceeded both local and national averages.
32. The average points score at advanced level indicated the best performance by students in the school in recent years.
33. Standards achieved by students in the key skills of communication, use of number and ICT are generally good.
34. Most students make good progress in meeting their agreed learning and attainment targets. Overall trends in performance show steady improvement in recent years. Students' progress and performance are monitored carefully and consistently. These procedures are useful in helping them to achieve success.
35. In most classes students are encouraged to take initiative and increased responsibility for their own learning. The great majority responds positively. This helps prepare them for future learning beyond the school.
36. Students gain in maturity during their time in school and make an important contribution to the school community. They have well developed personal and social skills, respect others and are aware of social and global issues.
37. Students' attendance at lessons in the sixth form is mostly good although a minority has less satisfactory records of attendance and tends to arrive late for lessons.

The quality of education and training

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

(110 lessons)	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	24%	57%	17%	2%	0%
KS4	21%	58%	15%	6%	0%
KS3 + KS4	23%	57%	17%	3%	0%
Sixth Form	0%	79%	21%	0%	0%
Whole School	20%	60%	17%	3%	0%

39. In almost a quarter of lessons observed there were outstanding features in the quality of teaching across KS3 and KS4. In almost 60% of lessons teaching had good features and no important shortcomings. Good features outweigh shortcomings in around 97% of lessons. The proportion of lessons in which grades one or two were awarded exceeds the national target for 2007. The proportion of lessons graded one, two or three is one percentile point below the national target for 2007.

KS3 and KS4

40. In the vast majority of lessons teachers plan for and meet the needs of most pupils very well indeed. They create and maintain a good working environment and stimulate, motivate and challenge pupils by presenting them with purposeful and interesting tasks. In many lessons teachers make good, or outstanding, use of resources to engage pupils actively in their work.
41. Pupils' day-to-day achievements and progress are monitored well by most teachers across the vast majority of subjects. In all subjects a major assignment is set every half term. This is marked rigorously and, in most cases, detailed feedback is given to pupils with a clear indication of how they could improve the work. Useful targets are often set for pupils to strive to achieve.
42. Reports are generally of good quality and help pupils to understand how they can improve their work and make progress. There is, however, some lack of consistency in the quality of targets set and comments made within and across subjects.
43. In a significant minority of lessons teachers make good use of all available assessment data to support individual pupils' needs. Appropriately challenging work for, and questioning of, individual pupils, at a level based upon knowledge of their prior attainment is an outstanding feature.
44. The curriculum is broad, balanced and flexible and meets effectively the learning needs and interests of pupils of differing abilities at both key stages. In KS3 statutory requirements are met with an appropriate time allocation to subjects. In KS4, there is a wide range of options including a variety of academic and vocational courses which gives pupils the opportunity to achieve qualifications.

The alternative curriculum in KS4 is an outstanding feature. It caters successfully for pupils at risk of disaffection.

45. Pupils in Y10 are offered a wide range of work placements that meet their individual needs. Provision is effective and prepares pupils very well for the world of work and career aspirations. An outstanding range of extra-curricular activities including clubs, visits and holiday courses promotes further pupils' learning and personal development. Pupils comment on the generous support given by teachers to pupils outside lesson time.
46. Pupils have equal access to the curriculum and the school tackles well social disadvantage and stereotyping. The school has extensive and productive links with local employers. It develops pupils' skills and knowledge in enterprise and problem-solving and participates successfully in a number of competitions and initiatives.
47. The school displays a caring ethos with many outstanding features in the ways it supports pupils. Positive relationships exist between pupils and staff. Strong and effective links are established between the school and outside support agencies. Good links are maintained with parents.
48. Parents and pupils receive useful information about the options available to them at key points in Y9 and Y11. The arrangements to ensure the smooth transition of pupils from primary schools are an outstanding feature of the school. Innovative and successful strategies are used to address parents' and pupils' concerns and to identify the needs of pupils.
49. Good systems are in place to monitor pupils' attendance, behaviour and academic progress and excellent use is made of these by staff. Procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour, punctuality and attendance are firmly in place and understood by pupils. Additional support offered to pupils who are reluctant to attend school in Y10 is an outstanding feature of provision.
50. Pupils in both key stages benefit from a PSE programme and careers education in Y11. A valuable contribution to this is made by Careers Wales.
51. The school provides a safe and caring environment. There are appropriate and well-documented child protection procedures.
52. The school makes very good provision for pupils who have a range of special and additional learning needs. The school's commitment to the inclusive education of these pupils is very evident and ensures that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. This is an outstanding strength of the school.
53. A well-qualified team of Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) provides appropriate and sensitive support for pupils with identified learning difficulties at both key stages.
54. The school deals effectively and sensitively with pupils in KS4 who show disaffection and are underachieving significantly.

55. The school recognises the nature of its intake through its close links with feeder primary schools and provides early intervention to tackle disadvantage and stereotyping and ensure equality of access. The Student Assistance Programme (SAP) provides outstanding support for small groups of pupils who need additional help.
56. The school has coherent policies and strategies to deal with racial harassment and staff are aware of these. There are very good links with the UA's ethnic minority monitoring unit who have audited policies and provision.
57. Pupils say that teachers take bullying seriously and deal quickly and effectively with any incidents that arise.
58. The school meets in full the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and takes appropriate action to ensure that disabled pupils are fully supported.

Sixth form

59. In the lessons observed, nearly 80% had good features and no important shortcomings in teaching. Good features outweighed shortcomings in all lessons observed.
60. Teachers establish very good working relationships with students and plan effectively to meet their individual needs. The range of teaching strategies is sometimes limited by the small size of classes. On occasion, it is difficult because of this for teachers and students to engage in group work or in-depth debate. Nevertheless students are motivated well to achieve highly and teachers' good use of school and other resources adds considerably to their quality of education.
61. Students' achievements are monitored closely by teachers. They receive good, and often outstanding, quality feedback that helps them to improve their work and to attain well. Reports are generally of good quality and helpful to students in enabling them to improve their work.
62. Students follow a good range of courses which prepares them effectively for higher and further education, training and employment. The school extends further this provision through collaborative arrangements with local schools and colleges. Numbers currently participating in these partnership arrangements are small.
63. Students benefit considerably by involving themselves in a wide range of extra-curricular activities including competitions and visits. Many students are trained to support younger pupils in primary schools. This greatly enhances their personal and social skills.

Leadership and management

KS3 and KS4

64. The headteacher, senior and middle managers provide outstanding leadership and clear direction. They have explicit aims and values which are shared by members of the school community at all levels. The quality of leadership and management is reflected in the significant progress made by the school in recent years.
65. Leaders and managers set challenging and realistic goals for learners, staff teams and the whole school. Progress towards achieving these goals is monitored carefully, consistently and systematically. Targets set take full account of national priorities and are supported by suitable provision of resources and professional development opportunities for members of staff.
66. Governors play an important role in monitoring the school's performance and helping to set its strategic direction. They are well informed about performance through their role in reviewing outcomes. They act as critical friends of the school and meet all regulatory and legal requirements.
67. Self-evaluation procedures are rigorous, transparent and highly effective in enabling the school to move forward. Senior managers have developed and implemented a systematic monitoring and evaluation programme (MAP) that requires regular close scrutiny of a wide range of data and evidence at all levels.
68. Self-evaluation is embedded in the culture of the school. The vast majority of the staff understand and are fully involved in the process.
69. One of the results of the robust self-evaluation process is the SDP that identifies clear school improvement priorities. These are supported by appropriate allocation of resources.
70. The school's self-evaluation report is a wide-ranging document that addresses the seven key questions of the inspection framework. It identifies measurable improvements made by the school as a result of monitoring and evaluation.
71. The self-evaluation process is of high quality and represents one of the strengths of the school. It has several outstanding features including transparency, consistency across departments and rigour.
72. The school is suitably staffed to ensure that the demands of the curriculum and the needs of pupils are met. Due to long-term absences and recent staff losses there are a small number of departments, however, where the number and suitability of staff are not appropriate to curricular and pupils' needs.
73. The school enjoys outstanding resources. A significant number of resources are funded through the PFI. The provision of resources ensures that pupils have excellent opportunities to gain experience of specialist equipment in subjects

such as design and technology, science, art and music. The learning resource area, ICT and sporting facilities are also of very high quality.

74. The purpose-built accommodation provides an outstanding setting for learning in all areas of the curriculum. The environment is stimulating and very well maintained.
75. Senior managers and the governing body carefully consider financial decisions. The school manages its budget effectively and spending is projected on a three-year basis.
76. Good use is made of a bidding procedure linked to the priorities identified in the SDP. Departments can access additional development money in this way.
77. Senior managers work closely with the commercial company finance manager to ensure effective and efficient use of resources. Senior managers have a clear view of the costs of resources and involve themselves in regular meetings with PFI stakeholders to ensure that they are fully informed about financial decisions.

Sixth form

78. The sixth form is a valued and integral part of the school. The good features of leadership and management as a whole are also reflected in the management of the sixth form.
79. The school has taken a lead in developing partnerships with other providers of education and training in the locality. It works with neighbouring schools and colleges to extend the range of courses available to students. Some arrangements are in place and are of benefit to students.
80. The school provides value for money in most cases. The relatively small sixth form is not cost effective insofar as it does not meet the Audit Commission recommended figure of 150 students. The school has identified, as a priority for development, the need to extend formal partnerships with other educational providers to address this issue. Senior managers have worked closely with the local authority to draw up proposals for consortium provision in the area.
81. The school addresses the issue of small class sizes in the sixth form by reducing the curriculum time allocated to subjects with low student numbers.

Progress since the last inspection

82. The school has made very good and, in some cases, outstanding progress in addressing the key issues identified in the last inspection report. In particular:
 - major improvements have been made to the quality of the accommodation;
 - the standards achieved by pupils and students have improved significantly;
 - the quality of assessment and target setting is now a notable strength of the school;
 - curriculum planning and timetable arrangements have good and outstanding features;

- provision for pupils with SEN is significantly improved through the adoption of an inclusive approach and the increased use of suitable support staff;
- senior and middle management has good and outstanding features and no important shortcomings; and
- the school meets statutory requirements for providing a daily act of collective worship and religious education in the sixth form.

Recommendations

In order to sustain and continue the improvements made, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- R1 address the shortcomings identified in this report in some subjects;
- R2 share more widely the good practice in using purposefully information about pupils' prior attainment to inform teaching strategies;
- R3 continue to broaden the provision for sixth form students by developing further links with other local providers;
- R4 monitor and evaluate the planned provision for religious education in the sixth form; and
- R5 continue to develop good practice in tackling attendance, punctuality and behaviour problems.

All of these recommendations are addressed in the current School Development Plan.

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 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

83. The grade awarded by the inspection team is lower than the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report. This is due mainly to differences in the grade descriptions used by the school and by inspectors. In other important respects inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation.

KS3 and KS4

84. The following table shows the standards that pupils achieved in KS3 and KS4 in the six subjects inspected:

(67 lessons)	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	15%	57%	25%	3%	0%
KS4	11%	48%	30%	11%	0%
KS3 + KS4	13%	54%	27%	6%	0%

Pupils' success in attaining agreed learning goals

85. The figures in the table above fall a little short of the national target for all pupils for 2007, which is for 98% of standards to be graded one, two or three. They exceed the national target for 65% to be graded one or two. Across the six subjects inspected the school achieved 94% and 67% respectively.

86. Overall, the highest standards were achieved in modern foreign languages in both key stages and in English in KS3 where there were good and outstanding features. In English in KS4, information technology and religious education in KS3 and geography in both key stages there were good features and no important shortcomings. In science in both key stages and information technology and religious education in KS4 good features outweighed shortcomings.

87. Pupils with additional learning needs receive very good support and generally achieve good standards.

88. The great majority of pupils achieve standards that match or exceed their agreed learning goals. There are no significant barriers to learning. All pupils have appropriate opportunities to achieve well whatever their social background or ability.

89. Targets are set for pupils based on their ability and prior attainment. Target setting is a good feature across the curriculum and makes a significant contribution to the achievement of good standards. Most pupils respond well to the targets and measure their progress and achievement against them.

90. Pupils' skills in communication are good with no important shortcomings. Most pupils speak well and express themselves clearly. They listen attentively in lessons. Reading skills are also good. Significant progress has been made in the development of pupils' writing skills since the last inspection. Pupils are able to write for different purposes using forms such as note-taking or extended writing appropriately.
91. Pupils are able to apply their numeracy skills in most subjects across the curriculum. They generally make good and appropriate use of these skills.
92. Considerable progress has been made in the development of pupils' ICT skills since the last inspection. Standards are at least good across the curriculum and there are outstanding features in some subjects such as modern foreign languages and geography.
93. All pupils study Welsh as a second language. Most are making good progress in the development of their bilingual competence in Welsh and English but with some variation across the curriculum. In a number of lessons bilingual signs and displays and the incidental use of Welsh by some teachers promote this development.
94. Attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at the end of KS3 has improved since the last inspection. The most recent test results in English are significantly higher than the average for boys locally and nationally. In mathematics the results are above the local average for boys and equal to the national average. In science, results equal the local average but are below the national average.
95. The proportion of pupils achieving level five or above in each of the core subjects is significantly higher than the local average and slightly higher than the average for Wales. When considered within the socio-economic context of the school these results represent significant achievement.
96. GCSE results have improved significantly since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils achieving five or more A*-C grades is below the average for schools with a similar but mixed gender intake. For pupils achieving five or more A*-G grades the school's figures are very close to the average for similar schools with a mixed gender intake. Normally, boys do not perform as well as girls at this stage. These figures are, therefore, evidence of notable achievement.
97. The number of pupils achieving grade C or above in each of the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science (the Core Subject Indicator or CSI) matches the average for similar mixed schools. Attainment in English and mathematics is higher than in science.
98. Overall, trends in performance show significant improvement during the last four years. In KS4 attainment is much higher than it was in 2002. The number of pupils achieving five or more GCSE grades A*-C and A*-G has risen by eight and 18 percentile points respectively. The CSI has increased by seven points in

the same period whilst the average GCSE points score is four percentile points higher.

99. The school has made particularly good progress in increasing the attainment of pupils of average or below average ability. The sustained progress is an outstanding feature.

Pupils' progress in learning

100. Across the curriculum and at both key stages pupils generally make good progress, whatever their ability. Most show high levels of interest in their work and in the progress they are making. They make good progress in acquiring new knowledge, skills and understanding and applying them in increasingly less familiar situations.
101. The great majority of pupils has a good understanding of their own levels of performance and achievement. Most know their strengths and weaknesses and what they should do to improve their standards of achievement. Very good use is made of data based on previous attainment and ability to set targets for further improvement.
102. Most pupils make good progress in relation to their abilities through the subjects and courses they are studying. This helps them to move from one stage of education to the next. Good use is made of information from primary schools and initial assessments when pupils join the school to help pupils perform to the best of their abilities. Good induction procedures enhance pupils' progress from KS2 to KS3.
103. In KS4 the provision made for pupils who are reluctant to attend school helps these pupils make appropriate progress in relevant areas of study.
104. Most pupils have a good work ethic. As a consequence, most learners realise their potential and many exceed expectations.

The development of pupils' personal, social and learning skills

105. Most pupils show positive attitudes to learning. The great majority is well motivated in lessons and responds positively to the tasks set. Most pupils show real interest in their work and sustain suitable levels of concentration. A small minority of pupils, mainly in KS4, finds some difficulty in meeting the demands set for them and shows less positive attitudes.
106. The behaviour of most pupils is good, both in lessons and around the school. The overwhelming majority appears to be good-natured and naturally courteous. Pupils enjoy good relationships with each other and with members of staff. They are welcoming to visitors.
107. It is relatively rare for inappropriate behaviour to affect learning in lessons. A small minority of pupils in KS4, however, occasionally seek to disturb some lessons but the majority tends to dissociate themselves from any disruption.

Pupils are confident that any bullying that occurs can be dealt with effectively and promptly by teachers.

108. Rates of attendance are steadily improving. Improving attendance has been a particular focus for development and action. The progress made in improving attendance is a good feature of the school's performance. Nevertheless, the unsatisfactory attendance of some pupils in KS4 remains a cause for concern. It is being addressed through a range of strategies including the provision of alternative curricula.
109. Attendance during the last year is a little below the national target of 92% but is similar to the local average. Accurate records of attendance are kept and the school acts promptly in the event of pupils' absence. Good levels of attendance are actively encouraged. Punctuality is good overall but a minority of pupils, mainly in KS4, tends to arrive late for lessons.
110. Many teachers encourage pupils to develop the confidence to adopt more independent approaches to learning. Pupils develop their problem-solving and decision-making skills. Most work well, both individually and in collaboration with others.
111. The PSE programme helps pupils to develop their skills in working independently and acquire positive attitudes to life-long learning.
112. Pupils make good use of the varied opportunities provided in lessons, assemblies and extra-curricular activities to enhance their personal development. These opportunities promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The great majority of pupils demonstrate this through the positive attitudes and values they show.
113. Pupils show awareness and respect for different lifestyles, beliefs and cultures. Their knowledge and understanding of social diversity are increased through assemblies, local and wider community-based activities such as visits and in lessons in many subjects. Their concern for others is shown by their participation in a range of fund-raising activities for different charities.
114. Work-Related Education (WRE) in which all pupils in Y10 are involved, helps prepare them for participation in the workplace and community. Pupils report that they enjoy these experiences and feel that they help them understand the world of work and the life of the community in general.

Sixth form

115. The following table shows the standards that sixth form students achieved in the subjects inspected:

(13 lessons)	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Sixth form	0%	85%	15%	0%	0%

Students' success in attaining agreed learning goals

116. Although the sample is small, these figures exceed both national targets for 2007 of 65% of lessons to be graded one or two and 98% to be graded one, two or three.

117. In English, modern foreign languages and geography, standards achieved by students had good features and no important shortcomings. In science and information technology the good features in the standards students achieved outweighed some shortcomings. There were no scheduled lessons in religious education in the sixth form during the week in which the inspection was carried out.

118. Standards of attainment at advanced level have improved significantly since the last inspection. Of students who were entered for two or more subjects, 63% achieved grades A to C, compared to 53% locally and 34% in the school at the time of the last inspection. The proportion of students entered for two or more subjects who achieved grades A to E exceeded both local and national averages. The average points score at advanced level indicated the best performance in the sixth form in recent years.

119. Students' standards in communication skills are predominantly good. They listen attentively, maintaining good levels of concentration. Most demonstrate the ability to give extended answers to questions and are confident and articulate in class discussions. Standards in reading and writing are good. Most students can write extended pieces that reflect the demands of subjects and courses.

120. Sixth form students have good ICT skills. Some work carried out in modern foreign languages using ICT is outstanding. Students apply their ICT skills effectively in most subjects. They make good use of computers to find and process information and to enhance the presentation of their work.

121. Students' numerical skills are good. Numeracy is embedded in many aspects of the curriculum and students apply their skills in handling numbers effectively in most subjects.

122. As in KS3 and KS4, there is some variation in the opportunities provided for students to develop their bilingual competence. Many students, however, show understanding of signs and displays in teaching rooms and corridors. They respond positively to the incidental use of the Welsh language by some

teachers. Despite this understanding they rarely use the Welsh language in conversation.

123. The school has an inclusive policy for those wishing to join the sixth form. Around 42% of pupils remain in school after Y11 whilst about 28% continue their studies in further education colleges. Once students begin their studies in Y12 about 75% of them remain to complete their studies in Y13. Of these, around three-quarters proceed directly to higher education.

Students' progress in learning

124. Most students make good progress in meeting their learning and attainment targets. Overall, trends in performance show steady improvement during recent years. Students' progress and performance are carefully and consistently monitored. These procedures are useful in helping students achieve success.

125. In most classes students are encouraged to take initiative and increased responsibility for their own learning. The great majority responds very positively. This helps prepare them for future learning beyond the school.

The development of students' personal, social and learning skills

126. Students gain in maturity during their time in the sixth form and make an important contribution to the school community. They have well-developed personal and social skills, respect others and are aware of social and global issues.

127. Attendance and punctuality at lessons in the sixth form are mostly good but a small but significant minority of students has less satisfactory attendance and tends to arrive late for lessons.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

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

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

KS3 and KS4

129. The following table shows the quality of teaching and assessment in the KS3 and KS4 lessons observed during the inspection.

(96 lessons)	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	24%	57%	17%	2%	0%

KS4	21%	58%	15%	6%	0%
KS3 + KS4	23%	57%	17%	3%	0%

130. In 23% of all lessons observed there were outstanding features in the quality of teaching across both key stages and in similar proportions. In about 57% of lessons teaching had good features and no important shortcomings. Good features outweigh shortcomings in around 97% of lessons. These percentages are well above the current national targets.

131. Lessons where teaching is outstanding are often characterised by:

- planned strategies that engage pupils actively in the lesson through probing questions and discussion, practical and group work;
- a very good awareness and use of pupils' prior attainment and other data, such as Individual Education Plans (IEP), to support well individuals' understanding and progress;
- a lively pace, enthusiasm and a very good rapport and working relationship between the teacher and pupils that enhance learning;
- very skilful and effective use of ICT and a range of other resources to encourage pupils' interest and motivation in the work and to support their understanding of it; and
- planned support at an appropriate level for the improvement of pupils' key skills .

132. In many other lessons where there are good features and no important shortcomings, some of the above characteristics are apparent, although to a lesser extent or implemented less effectively. In the vast majority of lessons teachers plan for and meet the needs of most pupils very well.

133. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it well to help pupils overcome misconceptions and to make progress in their work. Most have good up-to-date broader educational knowledge and show understanding of how pupils learn. Many are skilful in the way they challenge pupils to improve in a sensitive and supportive manner.

134. Shortcomings in a small minority of teaching are generally associated with a narrow range of teaching strategies and insufficient planning and support for the needs of individual pupils. In these lessons, particularly but not entirely in KS4, some pupils have difficulty in taking an active part whilst others are insufficiently challenged by the work. Pupils become restless, lose interest and do not make adequate progress.

135. Teachers are good role models for pupils and promote equality of opportunity well. They treat all pupils fairly and with respect and, through their subject and other lessons, actively address issues of gender, race and disability.

136. Teachers are aware of those pupils who can speak Welsh or another language and, where possible, they make planned efforts to engage them in incidental

conversation in those languages. While pupils have a good understanding of Welsh culture, their bilingual skills are put to limited use across subjects.

137. Teachers generally plan well to monitor and review all pupils' progress. Appropriate homework is given to pupils on a regular basis. Day-to-day assessment and review are mostly of good quality though inconsistent across subjects.
138. A major assignment is set and marked rigorously every half term and all pupils' progress is very efficiently and consistently monitored, recorded and reviewed on a sophisticated computerised management system. This aspect of teachers' monitoring and review of all pupils' progress is an outstanding feature.

Sixth form

139. In the lessons observed in the sixth form, the grades awarded for teaching were:

(14 lessons)	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Sixth form	0%	79%	21%	0%	0%

140. In the lessons observed, around 79% had good features and no important shortcomings in teaching. This is a very high percentage. Good features outweighed shortcomings in all of the lessons observed.
141. Teachers establish very good working relationships with students and plan effectively to meet their individual needs. In lessons where there are no important shortcomings some of the outstanding characteristics of teaching, identified in KS3 and KS4, are evident although to a lesser extent or implemented less effectively.
142. The range of teaching strategies is sometimes limited by the small size of classes and, on occasion, it is difficult because of this for teachers and students to engage in group work or in-depth debate. Nevertheless, students are motivated well to achieve highly and teachers' good use of school and other resources adds considerably to their quality of education.
143. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject and motivate students by appropriate and well-considered tasks. Students are encouraged to work independently and co-operatively with other students. They all receive very good individual support and guidance.
144. Day-to-day assessment and review is generally of very good quality. As in KS3 and KS4 a major assignment is set every half term and marked rigorously. Students' progress is planned, monitored, recorded and reviewed very well indeed.

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

KS3 and KS4

145. Overall, assessment is rigorous and used very well in planning and improving learning.
146. The vast majority of teachers assesses pupils' day-to-day work fairly, accurately and regularly, and gives good quality feedback to them. Of the six subjects inspected this is done particularly well in English and modern foreign languages.
147. Teachers and pupils have good understanding of the procedures and systems for assessing pupils' work and there is good consistency across the school in recording and reporting their achievements over time. The quality and use of transfer and other accumulated records are outstanding.
148. The school makes outstanding use of a well-developed and sophisticated computerised management system. The system allows for easy but sensitive access to pupils' records and other information by teachers, pupils, parents and the UA. In particular, pupils and parents can, for example, access the system from home to see homework, reports or other important school documents and respond on-line.
149. Trends in pupils' half-termly achievements or external examination attainment, over time and across subjects, are analysed well and the outcomes discussed with senior managers, teachers and with parents and pupils as appropriate.
150. In a significant minority of lessons teachers make good use of all available assessment data to support individual pupils' needs and to set targets for their improvement. Appropriately challenging work for, and questioning of, individual pupils, at a level based upon knowledge of their prior attainment, are outstanding features of their teaching.
151. In several subject areas pupils are involved well in self-assessment and reflect upon suitable targets to set for themselves.
152. In lessons where there are shortcomings, teachers do not always make sufficient use of assessment data and their knowledge of pupils' prior attainment, in order to plan and use teaching strategies to support well enough their individual needs.
153. Reports are generally of good quality and help pupils to understand how they can improve their work and make progress. Parents and pupils are informed fully about recording and reporting systems and comment about, and contribute to reports in writing or through the computerised system.
154. There is some inconsistency in the quality of commentary and targets for improvement in reports within and across subjects. The school is aware of this and is addressing the matter well.

155. The school meets all statutory requirements for assessing, recording and reporting pupils' achievements.

Sixth form

156. Overall, assessment is rigorous and used very well in planning and improving students' learning.

157. Teachers monitor students' achievements and progress closely and regularly. Students receive good, and often outstanding, quality feedback both orally and in writing that helps them to improve their work and to attain well.

158. Reports are generally of good quality and helpful to students in enabling them to improve their work. There is a little inconsistency in the breadth and depth of written comments and in setting targets that are linked explicitly to improvement in the subject.

159. As in the rest of the school, teachers of sixth-form students make outstanding use of the computerised management system to help them plan and to improve students' quality of learning and progress.

160. The comments and judgements about assessment described for KS3 and KS4 apply equally to the sixth form.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
--

161. The grade awarded is higher than the grade given by the school in its self-evaluation because of a number of outstanding features identified by the inspection team.

162. There are several outstanding features in the learning experiences provided by the school. These outstanding features include:

- the extent of the broad and balanced curriculum;
- the high quality provision for extra-curricular activities;
- the productive links with the community;
- the effectiveness of steps taken to tackle social disadvantage and stereotyping and ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all learners; and
- the school's commitment to take account of employers' needs.

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

163. The curriculum meets the needs of all learners at both key stages and reflects fully the aims set out for pupils of statutory age in the Education Act 1996. Pupils

of all abilities are able to study a broad range of subjects and are given the opportunity to achieve accreditation.

164. The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides progression between years and key stages. In KS3, statutory requirements are met with an appropriate time allocation to all subjects. In KS4, there is a wide range of options including a good variety of academic and vocational courses. The alternative curriculum which caters very successfully for pupils at risk of disaffection is an outstanding feature.
165. In the sixth form, students choose from a wide variety of courses which prepares them effectively for higher and further education, training and employment. The school extends this provision through partnership arrangements with local schools and colleges. Small class sizes in some sixth-form classes result in several large teaching groups in KS3 and KS4.
166. The school has effective provision for developing pupils' key skills. Key skills, particularly literacy and numeracy, are well planned in schemes of work.
167. The high quality provision of a very broad range of extra-curricular activities held during lunch breaks and after school hours promotes pupils' learning and personal development. Numerous educational visits and courses, at home and abroad, organised by departments and groups of teachers are very well supported by pupils and students.
168. Sporting fixtures, musical events and drama productions add to an impressive range of extra-curricular activities and have led to notable individual successes in, for example, international sporting honours and high achievement in music and drama.
169. The school promotes pupils' and students' personal development effectively. A comprehensive PSE programme covers a wide range of topics. This, together with curricular subjects, form-tutor pastoral periods and assemblies enriches pupils' moral and spiritual development.
170. Pupils and students are made aware of their own and other cultures in tutor groups, assemblies and within subject areas and by a range of extra-curricular activities including a number of visits to places of special interest.
171. Sixth-form students are trained to support younger pupils in feeder primary schools. This commitment greatly enhances their personal and social skills. Students' willingness to accept responsibilities for assisting younger pupils is an outstanding feature.
172. Links with parents and the local community are strong. Parents attend parents' evenings to discuss pupils' progress and are encouraged to attend various events at school.
173. The school has very impressive and productive links with a wide range of establishments and agencies in the locality and plays a full role within the Lewis

Cluster schools group with its main focus on developing primary to secondary school transition.

174. The school has very good links with initial teacher training institutions and welcomes a number of trainees annually.
175. The curriculum complies with legal requirements in all key stages. The school has provision for a daily act of worship.
176. The school has plans to provide religious education in the sixth form in partnership with two other schools. When implemented, the provision will meet the statutory requirement for religious education in the sixth form.

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

177. Work-related education is prominent in the curriculum. Y10 pupils undertake work-experience placements which are carefully monitored by teachers. Pupils record and evaluate their placements and details are kept in their progress files. The careers co-ordinator works closely with the careers advisers of Gyrfa Cymru Careers Wales. Students are encouraged to undertake a work placement in Y12 although this is not compulsory.
178. Bilingualism is developed effectively with pupils in KS3 and KS4 studying Welsh as a second language. The Welsh department plays a leading role in supporting colleagues develop cross-curricular links. The annual school eisteddfod, aspects of Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig in schemes of work, bilingual signs and several subject displays throughout the school raise awareness of the Welsh language within the school community as well as in everyday life.
179. The school is very successful in ensuring equality of access and opportunity for all learners and in tackling social disadvantage and stereotyping. Support given to pupils by staff and outside agencies, including youth workers, is an impressive feature of this provision.
180. Pupils' understanding and awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship are developed in several subjects. Pupils appreciate the importance of recycling and are made aware of the significance of the healthy eating initiatives being promoted by the school. Pupils have successfully participated in several initiatives. Developing the sustainability agenda was one of the school's key priorities in its strategic plan. The school has achieved Level One of the Green Dragon Quality Award and is also aiming for the first level of the Eco-Schools Award. These achievements enhance greatly pupils' awareness of sustainable development.
181. The school has extensive links with local employers. It also responds to the needs of employers by developing pupils' key skills, particularly in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Involvement with Compact and close links with the Education Business Partnership (EBP) reinforce strongly pupils' perception of the world of work.

182. The school compiles an effective programme to develop pupils' entrepreneurial skills. Pupils' problem-solving skills are well-developed in several subject areas and they participate successfully in a range of activities and competitions. Initiatives within business studies, involvement with the Dynamo project, links with EBP including several projects in design and technology and a fantasy football competition develops pupils' skills in enterprise initiatives very successfully.
183. The school seeks to develop pupils and students as independent learners and it encourages them to be responsible for their own learning. Overall through its broad range of courses the school is successful in developing pupils' skills for lifelong learning.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features
--

184. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.
185. There are several outstanding features in the way learners are cared for, guided and supported. These include:
- highly effective planning and management of care arrangements and support services;
 - high quality work undertaken in partnership with parents, partner primary schools, carers and employers;
 - monitoring of punctuality, attendance and behaviour which leads to prompt and effective action;
 - procedures for protecting children and young people and dealing with appeals and complaints;
 - provision of high quality for pupils with special and additional learning needs; and
 - provision of high quality for equality of opportunity.

The quality of care, support and guidance

186. The school provides a very good level of support for its pupils and successfully promotes a caring community. There are positive relationships between staff and pupils, between school staff and employees of the PFI and with outside agencies such as the educational welfare officer (EWO), school youth worker, Careers Wales, local police and other support services. Pupils find staff approachable and appreciate that their concerns will be dealt with effectively and sympathetically.
187. The school maintains good links with parents through parents' evenings, tutor review days, individual letters and, where necessary, telephone calls and text messaging. Internet links and access to the school's computerised tracking and

communication system are being developed to strengthen this partnership. Pupils' planners provide a weekly link between school and home. There is, however, a lack of rigour and consistency in the way in which these are used and monitored by parents and a minority of staff.

188. Parents and pupils receive information of good quality about the options available to them. Interviews with pupils and a useful option choice booklet equip them to make informed choices. The input of Careers Wales enhances the guidance and support pupils receive. Sixth-form students receive very good advice on subject choices, careers and applications for higher-education courses.
189. Arrangements to ensure the smooth transition of pupils from primary schools are outstanding. A well-organised and effective programme incorporates visits, induction days, Transition School Council, bridging units and the Voyager system. A transition project monitors standards across Y6 and Y7 and provides valuable data which is effectively used to identify needs and support pupils. The identification of tutor groups with the house system facilitates a sense of belonging.
190. The school gives good pastoral support and provides a valuable counselling service for pupils who might benefit from it. Very good additional support is provided through the SAP scheme for identified pupils. The oversight of this by the inclusion manager is very efficient. Form tutors and heads of year monitor both pupils' behaviour and academic progress, making very good use of the computerised tracking and communication system.
191. Pupils are positive about the PSE programme, which takes account of the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC) PSE framework. Specialist outside agencies, such as the police and health workers, make a positive contribution to the programme. As yet there has been no whole school audit of PSE provision across the curriculum and areas of the community aspect of the framework are not fully in place. Pupils benefit from a good careers programme in Y11.
192. The school has excellent systems in place for monitoring attendance and punctuality. These are well known to pupils along with the importance of good attendance. Members of staff make good use of the electronic registration system throughout the day. Prompt action is taken where there is cause for concern and there are good links with the EWO.
193. The very good computerised system is also used well to track personal and academic development. In addition to those pupils considered to be underperforming, the Most Able and Talented (MAT) pupils are also identified and appropriate action taken to support them. Procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour and improving it are effective and understood by pupils. A range of initiatives, such as SAP and Lewis Extra, have a positive effect on improving the attendance of pupils.

194. Policies and guidelines for assuring pupils' well-being, health and safety when travelling to school and when in the school's care are very well managed by the deputy headteacher. Healthy eating is promoted. Health and safety matters are covered well in the PSE programme.
195. The school has detailed child protection information in the staff handbook. The inclusion manager is the named person who takes responsibility for this and he keeps staff informed of his role and their responsibilities.
196. Year councils and the school council are effective forums for raising pupils' concerns and bringing issues to the attention of staff.

The quality of provision for additional learning needs

197. The school's inclusion policy ensures that all pupils with SEN have access to all areas of the curriculum. The school has developed successful strategies to support inclusive education. It has consistently high expectations of pupils with SEN.
198. There is early and careful identification of pupils with SEN through very good links with an increasing number of partner primary schools. The management of monitoring arrangements is extremely effective. This has allowed the inclusion manager to track the progress of individual pupils with SEN across all subjects. This has had a significant impact on raising the academic achievements and attendance of these pupils.
199. The inclusion policy helps pupils with SEN to make good progress. Most leave school with either a GCSE or other accredited qualifications. Good examples of adapting work to suit the individual needs of pupils are demonstrated in many subject. The school provides intensive support for pupils in KS4 who are displaying significant patterns of irregular attendance and emotional and behavioural difficulties.
200. Statutory requirements relating to the Code of Practice are met. The very detailed SEN register is reviewed regularly. Computer-generated generic IEPs are available on screen to all staff. Some IEP targets are not clear enough to meet the needs of pupils. Some subject departments make very good use of IEPs. Parental support at annual review meetings is very good. There are no formal arrangements for subject reports to contribute to the annual review process.
201. A well-qualified and committed team of LSAs provides very good support for pupils with identified needs. They have a good knowledge of their pupils and work closely with subject teachers to enable pupils to remain motivated and make good progress. LSAs contribute well to parental review meetings but do not attend annual review meetings.
202. The inclusion policy is both innovative and forward-looking. The very enthusiastic inclusion manager provides very effective guidance on SEN issues and leadership in co-ordinating provision. He is supported well by the teaching

staff, SMT and the designated governor. There are good links with external agencies.

The quality of provision for equal opportunities

203. The school, through its close links with partner schools, is able to identify and make an early intervention to support all pupils. This support continues throughout the time pupils are in school. The support offered by SAP and Lewis Extra for small groups of pupils who require additional help is an outstanding feature of the school. Programmes to support the most able are currently being developed.
204. Equal opportunities and equality of access to all aspects of school life are promoted positively. Stereotyping is actively discouraged. One of the five female students in the sixth form sits on the school council. Equal opportunities are also discussed in careers lessons.
205. The school has detailed and coherent policies and strategies to deal with issues of racial harassment and staff are aware of these. Issues are raised in assemblies and religious education. A positive contribution to racial and cultural awareness has been made through focused events such as Black History Month and a European Culture Day. Pupils are sensitive to the issues raised. The school works closely with the Gwent Ethnic Minority Support Service (GEMSS) whose audit of policies and provision by is currently informing the school action plan.
206. The topic of bullying is covered in assemblies and in the PSE programme. Pupils have been involved effectively in drawing up of the school anti-bullying policy. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are handled well and suitable action, which often combines sanctions and support, is taken to remedy any problem.
207. Pupils with identified disabilities such as hearing and visual impairment and Downs Syndrome are very well supported and catered for. The school fully complies with the DDA. Some outstanding features of school provision include touch-sensitive flooring and Braille notices.
208. The school has appropriate policies for the promotion of diversity and equal opportunities. The essence of these policies is visible throughout the school in the form of notices and displays. Various members of staff are knowledgeable in these areas. School activities such as collections for charities also make a positive contribution.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

209. The grade awarded by the inspection team matches the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report.

210. The strength of leadership is exemplified by the successful accomplishment of the move to new accommodation in 2002 and the highly effective use made of this facility since then. This has had a significant impact in raising the self-esteem and performance of learners and members of staff.

211. Outstanding features of the school's leadership and management include the:

- clear direction provided by leaders and managers through aims, values and objectives which are shared by members of the school community at all levels;
- extent to which these values are reflected in the routine work of the school;
- progress made in addressing national targets and priorities;
- quality and rigour of target-setting procedures;
- management and sustained improvement of individual staff, teams and departments; and
- the effectiveness of staff appraisal and review of performance which promotes professional development and enhances the quality of provision.

212. The headteacher provides purposeful leadership of high quality. This has been instrumental in achieving raised standards and the sustained improvements over recent years. He is supported well by a strong senior management team, which consists of two deputy headteachers and three assistant headteachers, and middle managers who share his high expectations of staff, pupils and students. The quality of teamwork demonstrated by leaders and managers is an outstanding feature.

213. All leaders and managers subscribe to the school's aims which are based on achievement, care and excellence. More recently the school's aims have focused on the belief that 'every person in our school matters'. This reflects the commitment to inclusion of all members of the school community. The school's aims and values are evident in all aspects of the school's day-to-day routines.

214. The school has an appropriate range of policies through which its aims are translated into practice and procedures. These are focused on learners' needs. Targets are agreed and set for individuals and teams in order to support continual development and sustained improvement.

215. The school's aims and values promote equality of opportunity for all members of staff whatever their role, background or experience. Although the senior management team is all male, female colleagues play a significant role at middle management level and are encouraged to aspire to more senior positions.

216. The school's current practice and planned future development takes full account of the WAG national priorities. It strives to meet the targets set. Some important targets for 2007 concerned with standards of achievement have already been met.

217. The school has taken a lead in developing partnerships with other providers of education and training in the local area. It works with neighbouring schools and colleges to extend the range of courses available to sixth-form students. Some

arrangements are already in place and some students benefit from them. The need to develop these initiatives further is recognised in the SDP.

218. Managers make good use of procedures for setting targets. They are set for learners, individual staff members, teams and departments and for the whole school. Targets are based on detailed analysis of previous performance, ability and potential. Very good use is made of data collated by the school to inform the process of target setting.

219. The targets which are set at all levels are challenging but achievable. Progress made towards the achievement of targets is monitored and reviewed systematically. Appraisal and performance management procedures make important contributions to this process. Support and training at appropriate levels are provided for staff members when this is identified as necessary to achieve improvement.

The extent to which governors meet their responsibilities

220. Governors play significant roles in helping to set the school's strategic direction. They have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. They operate through a suitable range of committees to work productively with leaders and managers. They review performance and make good use of their knowledge of the school to contribute effectively to planning. They share ownership of key documents, such as the SDP and self-evaluation report (SER), with senior managers.

221. Governors ensure they are well informed about issues that affect the performance of the school. They monitor performance through the scrutiny of results, for example from external examinations, and through meetings with managers. They plan to become more closely involved with the routine work of departments and through this to develop their monitoring role further.

222. Governors' sound understanding of school performance enables them to take effective and appropriate decisions about future development.

223. Governors fulfil all of their legal duties and responsibilities. They act as critical friends of the school. They hold senior and middle managers to account for the standards achieved and the quality of education provided. The key role played by the board of governors in helping to bring about new single-site accommodation is an outstanding feature of their recent work.

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

Grade 1: Good with outstanding features.

224. The grade awarded by the inspection team matches the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report.

225. The outstanding features in self-evaluation and planning for improvement include:

- the quality of the systems used routinely to monitor and evaluate performance at all levels;
- the effectiveness of planning for improvements; and
- the extent to which actions taken as a result of self-evaluation have led to significant and measurable improvements.

How effectively the school's performance is monitored and evaluated

226. The school's SER is a comprehensive document that addresses the seven key questions of the inspection framework. It clearly identifies the school's strengths and areas for development as well as highlighting improvements made by the school as a result of monitoring and evaluation.
227. Although the findings of the inspection team match those of the school in most cases, key question three has been given a higher grade and, key question one, a lower grade.
228. Overall, the self-evaluation process is of high quality and represents one of the strengths of the school. It has several outstanding features including transparency, consistency across departments and rigour.
229. Self-evaluation is highly effective in moving the school forward. Senior managers have developed and implemented a systematic monitoring and evaluation programme (MAP) that requires regular scrutiny of a wide range of data and evidence at all levels.
230. The headteacher and SMT have a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They gather a wide range of information including assessment data, benchmark statistics, subject reviews and departmental self-evaluation reports and use this to identify priorities for development.
231. Heads of department are, in most cases, equally well informed about standards of achievement and quality of teaching in their department. Much of the evidence is acquired from lesson observation and reviews of pupils' and students' work. In addition, visits to departments by the UA advisory service support the monitoring and evaluation system.
232. The well-established school council represents the views of pupils in relation to particular projects such as access to sports equipment in the lunchtime, environmental issues and changes to uniform. Senior managers and governors have responded effectively to initiatives instigated by pupils and acknowledge the role that pupils' views have to play in school development.
233. Some departments, for instance geography, have developed ways of capturing the views of pupils on teaching strategies. Generally, these approaches are not used equally well by all departments. The SDP identifies that this is a priority for development and senior managers have begun to find ways of surveying pupils' attitudes to a range of matters.

234. Self-evaluation is embedded in the culture of the school. The vast majority of staff understand and are fully involved in the monitoring and evaluation process.
235. At all levels, members of staff are well aware of how well they are performing. There is a close link between performance management targets, professional development activities and the school's priorities.

The effectiveness of planning for improvement

236. A result of the robust self-evaluation process is a detailed SDP that identifies clear school improvement priorities, responsibilities and resources. The SDP provides strategic direction over a three-year period. The school also takes account of other issues that emerge from its self-evaluation process, for example, the introduction of the computerised tracking and communication system.
237. Departmental development plans are presented in a consistent format, developed by senior managers. The quality of the plans is variable but all link closely to a wide range of targets such as the school's strategic priorities, school improvement priorities and UA priorities.
238. Departments set very focused and achievable developmental targets. Plans contain clear information on success criteria, actions required to achieve targets, responsibility, developmental needs and resource implications. Heads of department and senior managers work systematically to monitor the success of departmental targets.
239. The school has made very good progress in developing a new staffing structure in response to the changes to teachers' contracts. This has involved reflecting on strategic targets and formulating a clear rationale to the way in which management allowances should be allocated to support learning and teaching. The process has been transparent, resulting in a relatively smooth move towards the new structure.
240. Financial management arrangements ensure that priorities for development are adequately resourced. The school has a development fund to support departmental priorities for development. This system works very effectively to ensure that departments have sufficient resources to meet their targets.
241. Senior managers take account of the relationship the school has with the commercial company responsible for the financial management of the buildings and some of the resources. They work well within the constraints of the PFI to ensure that money is available for strategic priorities and school improvement priorities.
242. The school has made very good, and in some cases, outstanding, progress in addressing the key issues for action outlined in the previous inspection report. In addition to the obvious improvements in accommodation and resources as a result of the move to the new school in 2002, there are also clear improvements in course provision at KS4. The curriculum has been improved with the

introduction of Lewis Extra and now caters inclusively for the needs of a wider range of pupils.

243. Self-evaluation and planning for improvement are now securely embedded in the work of all staff. They are approached with rigour and structured within a regular and robust monitoring process.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

244. The grade awarded by the inspection team matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

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

245. The school is suitably staffed to ensure that the demands of the curriculum and the needs of the pupils are met. There is a good balance between experienced teachers and those new to the profession.

246. Due to long term-absences and recent staff losses, for instance in science, religious education and geography, there are a small number of departments where staffing does not fully support curricular, departmental and pupils' needs. Senior managers recognise the importance of ensuring that these weaknesses in staffing are addressed.

247. LSAs work closely with teachers and provide very good support for pupils with learning, behavioural and physical difficulties. They are deployed effectively and are valued members of the school community.

248. Members of administrative staff ensure that the school runs efficiently and smoothly. An information systems manager is responsible for arranging cover for absent staff as well as maintaining effectively the information systems within the school. This is an effective use of expertise.

249. The professional development of staff is very well co-ordinated in line with performance management, school development and departmental priorities. Newly-qualified teachers and initial teacher training students are very well supported.

250. The school has qualified for the award of 'Investors in People'. The governing body places great emphasis on the need for the school to retain this recognition.

251. Senior managers have made very good progress in addressing the need to remodel the school staffing structure in response to the workload agreement. Leaders and managers have made suitable arrangements to enable teachers to have time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA).

252. The school enjoys outstanding resources. A significant number of resources are funded through the PFI. The provision of resources ensures that pupils have excellent opportunities to gain experience of specialist equipment in subjects such as design and technology, science, art and music. The learning resource area, ICT and sporting facilities are also of outstanding quality.
253. The learning resource area is well-stocked with books and ICT facilities. Pupils have good access to this facility and are able to use it to support their learning during lunch times and after school as well as during timetabled lessons. It is well-used by pupils. The learning resource area is permanently staffed by a support worker who works closely with the local authority library service.
254. The purpose built accommodation provides an outstanding setting for learning in all areas of the curriculum. There is sufficient accommodation for the number of pupils currently on roll. Rooms for subjects are situated close to one another and are light and spacious. Public space such as the corridors and 'social hubs' are well used. These areas allow the pupils to move about the building in a relatively orderly manner.
255. The quality of display work and subject materials in classrooms is generally good. Some classrooms display outstanding examples of the ways in which teaching rooms can be transformed into stimulating learning environments, for instance, in history.
256. The buildings are very well maintained on a regular basis in line with the PFI contract. There is, however, an issue with the boundary fencing on the western side of the school. It is dilapidated and needs replacing to ensure that pupils cannot use this as a short cut out of the school. There is an unacceptable level of litter in this and other areas of the school.

How efficiently resources are managed to achieve value for money

257. The financial management of the school is good with no important shortcomings. Senior managers work closely with the commercial company financial manager to ensure effective and efficient use of resources. Senior managers have a clear view of the costs of resources and involve themselves in regular meetings with PFI stakeholders to ensure that they are fully informed about financial decisions.
258. Senior managers carefully consider financial decisions. The school manages its budget effectively and spending is projected on a three-year basis.
259. The governing body has been closely involved in the development of the new building and has a good insight into the financial position of the school. The governing body reviews spending regularly and intervenes when necessary in order to ensure that the school gives value for money.
260. The minor recommendations in the most recent auditors' report have been addressed.

261. Members of staff are deployed effectively. Spending on staff development is monitored carefully to ensure that professional development is of benefit to the school, for instance in developing ICT proficiency to support the increase in ICT resources.
262. Although spending is carefully planned, the constraints of the PFI contract mean that any necessary savings have to be made from staffing levels rather than through adjusting the spending on accommodation or resources.
263. Day-to-day management of the school's finances is carried out very well. Departments are provided with accurate information so that they can monitor their spending efficiently.
264. Senior managers recognise that relatively small student numbers in the sixth form mean that the school is not providing the most effective educational experience for those pupils and that the expense of supporting a small sixth form impacts on the cost-effectiveness of the school.
265. The school is addressing the issue of small class sizes in the sixth form by reducing the curricular time allocated to subjects with low student numbers.
266. The school has identified, as a priority for development, the need to extend formal partnerships with other education and training providers. The school is taking the lead in working with the local authority to develop a 14-19 model based on consortium provision. This reflects the way in which the headteacher and senior managers critically review the effectiveness of the curriculum and related spending and are keen to take the initiative in addressing concerns.
267. The school achieves good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

English

Key Stage 3 **Grade 1:** Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 4 **Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings

KS3 and KS4

Outstanding features

269. Many pupils in Y7 use rich vocabulary correctly and with confidence in their work in English lessons.

270. In KS3 the qualities of expression and fluency, demonstrated by some pupils in discussions, are outstanding and show well-developed listening and speaking skills.

271. The ability of many pupils in KS3 to read analytically and derive meaning from texts and books is outstanding.

Good features

272. In KS3, pupils' speaking abilities are good across a wide range of tasks. These tasks include the use of talk as a tool for learning in the classroom and pupils show that they can collaborate thoughtfully in group and pair situations as well as in whole-class discussions.

273. The great majority of pupils speaks confidently when discussing a series of suitable topics and, when explaining or answering, pupils make valid contributions in standard English. They also display good listening skills when considering the ideas of others and taking account of other viewpoints. Pupils interact productively with teachers and engage in lively verbal exchanges that often take their learning forward.

274. The majority of pupils read proficiently. Responses to reading indicate good understanding and pupils respond well to a range of fiction texts, for example Michael Morpurgo's *The Windsinger*, and to non-fiction material. A number of pupils demonstrate more highly developed reading skills such as the ability to skim and scan for key information.

275. Most writing is done with enthusiasm and fluency in response to an appropriate range of tasks. These include letter and diary writing, creative work and non-fiction tasks with a range of purposes and audiences in mind. The great majority of pupils produces technically accurate work that expresses ideas with increasing fluency.

276. A number of pupils also make effective use of ICT particularly when they complete homework assignments and some, for example, are mastering Powerpoint to summarise factual information about the planets.

277. Less able pupils and those with SEN make sound progress in all years of KS3.

278. At KS3, pupils' work shows strong progression over time and collectively represents very good achievement for these pupils.

279. In KS4, most pupils respond well orally in standard English and in a manner that displays good understanding of the topics they are studying. In group discussion, they listen carefully and demonstrate maturity and purpose in discussions with one another.

280. Standards of reading are good in KS4 and more able pupils read texts with expression and understanding. They respond well to a wide range of texts,

including Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Steinbeck's *Of Mice & Men* and the poetry of Tennyson. The most able in Year 11 meet the challenge of analysing a Shakespearean sonnet and the poetry of Andrew Marvell.

281. In connection with spoken and written responses to reading many pupils offer perceptive viewpoints that indicate well-developed levels of discrimination.
282. The majority of pupils produces good quality writing which shows increasing complexity and sophistication. Writing is often the product of considered drafting and careful planning. A number of pupils routinely word-process work to a high standard.
283. Personal response and thoughtful appreciation of words are well developed. Pupils are able, in numerous instances, to engage in self-assessment and recognise themselves how their writing might be improved.
284. Less able pupils are supported well, the department makes good provision for them in small groups and helps them to achieve good standards. Many of these pupils take advantage of the opportunities offered to take external examinations.

Shortcomings

285. A minority of pupils sometimes show some initial hesitancy either to respond verbally or to focus attentively on tasks in hand.
286. In less good work, writing is sometimes unfinished and minor technical errors are more frequent.

Sixth form

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

Good features

287. The great majority of students is articulate and engages in productive dialogue with each other and with the teacher. These well-focused discussions of key concepts, for example, in exploring complex aspects of literary style, tone, narrative voice and point of view are a particular strength.
288. The majority of students knows texts such as Shakespeare's *King Lear* well and demonstrates in written and verbal responses that they have grasped the key tools for textual analysis.
289. The majority of students displays an ability to engage fully with critical debates and they display discrimination in their writing in an informed and analytical manner.

Shortcomings

290. The written work of a small minority of students is insufficiently perceptive and analytical with some minor technical errors. A few make errors in their use of quotations to support arguments and their work tends to be more superficial.

Science

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

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

KS3 and KS4

Good features

291. Pupils of lower ability and with SEN are well motivated and participate actively in class. They are achieving good levels in the National Curriculum assessments.

292. Throughout KS3 pupils show good understanding of the appropriate parts of the National Curriculum in science. Their knowledge of scientific terms is good and they can use scientific terms correctly, both orally and in writing.

293. Pupils' experimental skills are good. When carrying out practical work they pay appropriate attention to safety. They collect data and are developing their skills to analyse and interpret what they find. The majority of pupils makes scientific predictions and understands the concept of a fair test.

294. The majority of pupils writes good explanations of their work in science and give extended verbal responses to questions. They present their results from scientific experiments using graphs, bar and pie charts appropriately. Most pupils understand and interpret these graphs and charts well. Some pupils make good use of ICT to display their work.

295. Pupils in KS4 demonstrate a sound understanding of scientific facts and ideas. The majority uses this knowledge to make scientific predictions. They understand scientific terms and use them appropriately to describe their work. Some pupils make good use of ICT to display their work and analyse experimental results.

296. Pupils have good practical skills and understand the concept of the fair test. The more able pupils understand about experimental error and its possible causes. Most can use graphs to present their results and draw conclusions.

297. All pupils are entered for at least a single award GCSE in science. They know their target grade and their current performance level.

298. In class, many pupils respond well to questions by giving extended answers which show a good understanding of science topics.

Shortcomings

299. A significant minority of pupils fails to finish pieces work and parts of their work contain inaccuracies. A minority of pupils has difficulty in interpreting graphs and charts they have drawn.

300. In a minority of classes in KS3 pupils are inattentive and make slow progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding about science.

301. In some classes in KS4 a few pupils have a poor attitude towards their work and misbehave. This limits their progress.

302. Some pupils do not understand the significance of the work they are doing and cannot remember or use previous work.

Sixth form **Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

303. Sixth-form students have a good understanding of scientific ideas. They talk knowledgeably about science and use scientific terms accurately.

304. Students make scientific predictions in unfamiliar situations. They have good practical skills and present their data graphically. They use ICT effectively to display their work and analyse their results.

305. Most students understand the nature and purpose of their work in science and show good levels of motivation and interest.

Shortcomings

306. A few sixth-form students are insecure in their grasp of previous work and this affects their ability to understand new concepts.

307. The frequent absence of a few students has a detrimental effect on the pace and quality of their progress.

Information technology

Key Stage 3 **Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings

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

KS3 and KS4

Good features

308. In KS3 pupils use IT equipment confidently and competently to achieve specific outcomes, appropriate to their age and development.
309. All pupils share, exchange and combine different forms of information and are able to select information and styles to match specifically an audience and purpose.
310. Pupils work accurately and can explain the importance of presenting their work correctly. They work autonomously making appropriate choices concerning their work and IT, appropriate to their age and development.
311. Pupils explore usefully the effects of changing variables in computer models. Some pupils design appropriate spreadsheets, modeling situations and can assess their validity.
312. In KS4, pupils build on their previous experience becoming more confident, autonomous and competent in their use of IT equipment to achieve specific outcomes for different purposes and audiences.
313. When appropriate, pupils design suitable systems for others to use, which may involve means of data capture and the processing of information.
314. Pupils demonstrate an appropriate understanding of the impact of IT in the outside world and understand the contribution made by IT systems to business in particular. Many pupils explain ethical constraints concerning data protection.

Shortcomings

315. There are no significant shortcomings in KS3.
316. In KS4 a significant proportion of pupils on the double award IT GCSE course are unable to give extended explanations about IT processes when required.
317. A significant minority of pupils embarks on tasks without fully analysing them first and has difficulty explaining their choices subsequently.

Sixth form **Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

Good features

318. Students produce appropriate solutions to tasks involving system design. They demonstrate good IT skills.
319. Most students have a good understanding of the need to analyse a brief and implement a critical design process. Most then articulate the process well, explaining the steps and the subsequent need for testing.

320. Most students understand methods of data capture and sources of error. They apply methods of validation and understand verification. They design appropriate databases which encode complex relationships.

Shortcomings

321. A significant minority of students embarks on tasks without fully understanding the rationale or theory. They are able to complete tasks through the use of exemplars but several do not fully understand the theory behind what they have done.

322. A few students have a superficial appreciation of the relationship between a theoretical project and an everyday working system.

Modern foreign languages

Key Stage 3 **Grade 1:** Good with outstanding features

Key Stage 4 **Grade 1:** Good with outstanding features

KS3 and KS4

Outstanding features

323. In KS3, pupils of all abilities speak French clearly and confidently, demonstrating accurate pronunciation. They speak in full sentences and, on occasion, at length on familiar topics. Many pupils readily extend their answers beyond what is expected and support their responses with simple opinions and reasons.

324. Across the key stage, pupils demonstrate outstanding progress through topics. They readily and accurately use new structures in their own responses. Some pupils successfully predict the formation of grammatical structures.

325. Many pupils in Y7 already manipulate language for their own purpose. They have an outstanding grammatical awareness.

326. In KS4, pupils of all abilities formulate their ideas coherently in spoken and written French. They engage fully in debate and reflect maturely on contemporary issues.

327. With support, pupils of all abilities refine their responses, manipulate grammatical structures and personalise new language learned.

Good features

328. Throughout KS3, pupils participate successfully in a wide range of tasks and activities. They demonstrate a clear understanding of what is expected of them and take a pride in their work.

329. In teacher-led discussions, pupils listen respectfully to each other's contributions. They demonstrate increasingly good recall of language. More able pupils identify key points from short paragraphs and manipulate the language in their own oral work.
330. With appropriate support, pupils of low ability make valid contributions to lessons. When prompted, they adjust their speech and improve the level of their contributions considerably.
331. Pupils of all abilities demonstrate good progression from KS3 to KS4 and across the key stage. They continue to move with confidence from simple to more complex language structures.
332. In KS4, pupils demonstrate good recall of vocabulary and structures. They use mind-mapping techniques to organise their ideas effectively. They articulate their ideas with confidence and use new vocabulary accurately in context. Pupils use dictionaries effectively to develop their language knowledge.
333. In listening exercises, pupils make language predictions and successfully use these as a basis for comprehension. Pupils read aloud with confidence and have good pronunciation and accents.
334. By Y11, pupils write accurately on a range of GCSE topics. They make use of writing frames and scaffolding techniques to support and improve their own writing skills. More able pupils incorporate a range of tenses into their written work, write extended responses and recycle previously learned language effectively. Some pupils are beginning to use language imaginatively.

Shortcomings

335. Some pupils in KS3 occasionally mispronounce words when reading aloud.
336. A small minority of low ability pupils in Y9 does not focus during teacher-led oral work. They do not complete their class work despite teachers' comments and support.
337. A small minority of pupils in KS4 loses confidence when they want to express more complex ideas orally or in writing.

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

Good features

338. In Y12 and Y13, students make sustained progress in the four language skills. They respond to language of increasing complexity. They elicit meaning from a wide range of authentic texts and when prompted, expand their responses considerably. Students use dictionaries and reference materials effectively to support and improve their learning.

339. Students prepare thoroughly before lessons, and as a result are articulate, confident and demonstrate good pronunciation when speaking using familiar language on contemporary issues. They express their ideas fluently, making use of a wide range of tenses and structures.
340. Students identify key messages in a range of listening materials. By Y13, they listen for gist and detail to authentic spoken language in different registers at normal speed. In the best examples, students manipulate the language they have heard, using it appropriately in their oral work.
341. Students write increasingly sophisticated and extended pieces, using a variety of tenses, although not always accurately. They adapt prior language knowledge to suit their purpose. They make appropriate comparisons between the culture of France and that of Wales. Students justify their opinions, providing reasons and referring to personal research from French newspapers and internet sources.

Shortcomings

342. Students are sometimes reluctant to initiate conversations or respond spontaneously.
343. Occasionally students use language less accurately when adapting it for their own needs. However, their meaning remains clear.

Geography

Key Stage 3 **Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings

Key Stage 4 **Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings

KS3 and KS4

Good features

344. In KS3, many pupils show good knowledge of the location and features of places and develop their understanding through review of local, Welsh, European and worldwide case studies at different times.
345. Pupils possess a secure knowledge of the geography of Wales and use it to compare and contrast the characteristics of Wales with other distant places.
346. Most students demonstrate an understanding of the relationships between people and their environments and possess a sound understanding of the importance of sustainable development.
347. The majority of pupils understand the geographic relationship between process and pattern within human geography.

348. Pupils generally use maps, diagrams, photographs and numeric data effectively and scrutinise these sources to draw sensible geographical conclusions.
349. Many pupils demonstrate a grasp of geographic vocabulary and terminology and apply terms with accuracy and within the correct contexts.
350. In KS4 pupils display a sound knowledge and understanding of the relationships between process and landforms in physical geography and process and structure in human geography.
351. Pupils' written and oral responses are generally of a good standard. They have developed a heightened capacity to describe and analyse more complex geographic phenomena.
352. Pupils have developed a good understanding of place, particularly in respect of areas of study already undertaken. They demonstrate their understanding of place by selecting information from very local examples and relating it to international contexts.
353. Pupils' knowledge of geographic issue is shown by their interest and motivation when discussing and evaluating topics.
354. Almost every pupil displays empathy with countries less economically advanced than the one in which they live and shows understanding of global interdependency.

Shortcomings

355. The poor attitude to learning of a small minority of pupils in KS3, within certain classes, compromises their standard of achievement.
356. A small minority of pupils has incomplete records of work in their books and files.
357. In KS4 a small minority of pupils' written and oral responses in class-work and in classroom presentations lack the required depth of knowledge and understanding expected at this key stage.
358. A small minority of pupils shows an attitude to learning which is inappropriate. They do not remain on task and consequently only complete work of a limited standard.

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

Good features

359. The majority of students displays good knowledge and understanding of a range of geographic topics and concepts and shows the capacity to demonstrate, and use effectively, appropriate geographic skills.

360. The majority of students demonstrates a good understanding of the relationships between process and patterns in both physical and human geography.

361. Students generally show the capacity to use geographic resources and handle data effectively in order to analyse problems, and present geographic conclusions.

362. Most students conduct effective independent research and produce fieldwork and coursework of a good and sometimes very good standard.

Shortcomings

363. The work of a minority of students shows lack of depth and detail within both written exercises and classroom discussions and presentations.

Religious education (including religious studies)

Key Stage 3 **Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings

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

KS3 and KS4

Good features

364. In KS3, pupils across the ability range have good factual knowledge and understanding of the units of work studied, which reflect the local agreed syllabus.

365. Pupils demonstrate an awareness of how religious belief influences behaviour. Many show an awareness of the contemporary relevance of religious belief and practice.

366. Pupils use a good range of religious vocabulary. The more able express their own views well and support them with evidence.

367. Pupils with SEN make good progress and respond well to the work set for them both orally, and in writing.

368. In KS4, many pupils have a good factual knowledge and understanding of the units of work studied, which reflect the local agreed syllabus.

369. Pupils are aware of the ways in which people's lifestyles are affected by their religious beliefs.

370. Pupils show a good understanding of the role played by sacred texts in different religions.

371. Pupils respond well to a high level of challenge. Close support enables them to work with confidence and accuracy .

372. External examination results continue to improve narrowing the gap between school, UA and all Wales averages for boys.

Shortcomings

373. In KS3 a minority of pupils sometimes finds it difficult to differentiate between the belief and practice of the three world religions studied so far.

374. In KS3, a minority of pupils lacks confidence in responding in oral and written forms.

375. In KS4, a small minority of pupils has an insecure knowledge and understanding of religious tradition and practice.

376. In KS4, minority of pupils sometimes demonstrates a superficial awareness of religious belief and practice in relation to contemporary social and moral issues.

377. In KS4, a minority of pupils has an insecure grasp of religious terminology. They lack confidence in making an appropriate oral and written response.

378. In KS4, a minority of pupils fails to make progress because some are uncertain of their level of achievement and their targets for improvement.

Sixth form There were no scheduled lessons in religious education in the sixth form during the week of the inspection.

379. At the time of the inspection there was no evidence upon which to make a judgement on standards.

School's response to the inspection

The headteacher, staff and governors are delighted that the inspectors have found Lewis School Pengam to be a very good school with many outstanding features.

We are very pleased that the report recognises that the school has made significant and continual progress over the last four years. The award of the highest grade in five of seven key questions recognises the many outstanding features of the school and is a ringing endorsement of the school's own self-assessment procedures.

Equally important is the finding that the great majority of teachers, staff, pupils and students work hard to achieve the school's three aims of achievement, care and excellence within an environment where every person matters. This is very positive recognition of the inclusive ethos of the school.

It is very pleasing that standards of achievement were judged to be grade 1 or grade 2 in 70% of lessons, exceeding the national target established by the Welsh Assembly Government despite the fact that we are an all-boys school. Additionally, we are gratified that the quality of teaching was found to be at least good in 80% of lessons, again exceeding the national target.

We note that the report appreciates the outstanding quality of leadership and management at all levels within the school and the outstanding teamwork involving all members of our community. We note that all the areas for further improvement are already included in the school's development plan. We will revise timescales and targets for further improvement in the light of the inspection findings and publish these for the information of parents and the wider school community.

We are delighted that the school's care, guidance and support for young people are deemed to be very good with outstanding features. We are very glad that our outstanding work with parents, carers and employers; our partnerships with partner primary schools; our procedures for resolving complaints and the high quality of provision for pupils with special and additional educational needs have been recognised.

The experience of inspection was valuable to the whole school in validating our sense of purpose and confirming that we have been moving forward on the right lines. We have found it a demanding but collegiate experience. It was conducted throughout in a thoroughly professional manner that allowed open and transparent discussion of our progress in each key question. This will allow us to continue to move forward together so that we build further on the great success of the last few years.

Appendix A

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Lewis School Pengam
School type	Secondary
Age-range of pupils	11 – 19 years
Address of school	Gilfach Bargoed
Postcode	CF81 8LJ
Telephone number	01443 873873
Headteacher	Dr C Howard
Date of appointment	1 st September 1993
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr D Morgan OBE
Reporting inspector	Mr P Carter
Dates of inspection	16 – 20 January 2006

Appendix B

School data and indicators

Year group	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	165	185	183	194	160	72	43	1002

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	52	3	53.9

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	18.6:1
Average teaching group size	23.7
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	78.6

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole School
Term 1	93.6	91	90.1	89.2	87.6	56.8	39.9	90.3
Term 2	90.9	89.1	89	86.2	85	69.4	41	88.04
Term 3	92.5	89.9	89.4	88.6	75.4	54.5	34.1	87.16

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	17
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	28

Appendix C

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of Key Stage 3:

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results: 2005															
Total number of pupils in Y9: 188															
Percentage of pupils at each level															
			D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	4	0	0	3	15	15	38	22	2	0	
		National	0	1	1	0	0	2	8	21	34	24	9	0	
Mathematics	Test	School	0	3	3	0	0	0	10	20	32	28	3	0	
		National	0	4	1	-	-	-	8	20	33	23	10	-	
	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	3	1	0	0	5	19	18	40	13	0	
		National	0	1	1	0	0	1	7	19	26	32	14	0	
Test	School	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	19	18	39	13	0		
	National	0	5	1	-	-	-	5	17	20	36	15	0		
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	4	0	0	0	6	26	31	27	6	0	
		National	0	1	1	0	0	0	6	20	33	27	12	0	
	Test	School	1	3	1	0	0	0	4	25	34	22	11	0	
		National	0	4	0	-	-	-	5	17	33	28	13	-	

- D Pupils excepted under statutory arrangements from part of the National Curriculum
A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence
F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence
W Pupils who are working towards level 1
EP Exceptional Performance, where pupils at Key Stage 3 perform above level 8

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language)			
by Teacher Assessment		by Test	
In the school	56.4	In the school	53.7
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 2005	175
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	35

The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2005:	School	UA	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	93	86	87
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	43	47	52
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	86	84	85
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	31	32	38
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	100	95	97
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	65	71	76
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent	95	91	93
attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent	5	9	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	66	56	52
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1	-	-	-
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2	-	-	-

For pupils aged 16, 17 and 18, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs			
Number of pupils aged 16, 17 and 18 in January 2005	58		
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2005	35		
Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2005	23		
	School	UA	Wales
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C	63	53	64
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E	94	88	93
Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects	18	18	20
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ at level 2	-	-	-
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Advanced or NVQ at level 3	-	-	-

Appendix D

Evidence base of the inspection

Sixteen inspectors (including the school's nominee and a peer assessor) spent a total of 52 inspector days in the school and met as a team before the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

- 80 lessons or part lessons in the six subjects inspected;
- lessons or part lessons taught by other teachers at the school
- acts of collective worship;
- registrations and form tutor periods; and
- a range of extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team had meetings with:

- staff, governors and parents before the inspection began; and
- senior managers, middle managers, teachers, support and administrative staff and groups of pupils and students during the inspection.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- 60 responses to a parents' questionnaire;
- comprehensive documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection; and
- a wide range of pupils' and students' work across the curriculum from Y7 to Y13

The registered inspector held post-inspection meetings with the senior management team and governors.

Appendix E

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Peter Carter Rgl	KQ1, KQ5
Dr Alan Cooke Core Team	KQ2
Mr Clive Rowlands Core Team	KQ3
Mr Martin Rawle Core Team	KQ4
Mrs Jayne Edwards Core Team	KQ6, KQ7
Mrs Rhiannon Boardman	Lay Inspector (contributing to KQ, KQ4, KQ7)
Mr Gwyn Griffiths	SEN Inspector (contributing to KQ4)
Mr Charles Harries	English
Mr David Hughes	Lead Science Inspector
Mr John Hopkins	Science
Mr Michael Pickin	Information Technology
Mr Alan Pritchard	Geography
Mrs Dawn Sadler	MFL
Mr Peter Harris	Religious Education
Mr Bryn Butcher	Nominee
Mr Tudor Griffiths	Peer Assessor

Acknowledgement

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

Contractor

Celtic Inspection Services Unit
University of Wales Institute Cardiff
Cyncoed Road
Cardiff CF23 6XD
Tel: 029 20416577