

**Inspection under Section 28 of the
Education Act 2005**

A report on the quality of education in

**Llanidloes High School
Llanidloes
Powys
SY18 6EX**

School number: 6664002

Date of inspection: 11 May 2009

by

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Llanidloes High School 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 Llanidloes High School took place between 11/05/09 and 13/05/09. An independent team of inspectors, led by William Gwyn Thomas 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.

Estyn's reports follow its guidance for the writing and editing of reports, which is available on the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk). The table below explains the terms that Estyn uses to indicate quantities. The table is for guidance only.

Nearly all	with very few exceptions
Most	90% or more
Many	70% or more
A majority	over 60%
Half/around half	close to 50%
A minority	below 40%
Few	below 20%
Very few	less than 10%

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 nursery schools, special schools, pupil referral units and any new or amalgamated schools receive a full inspection.

This school received a **short** 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

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Context

The nature of the provider

- 1 Llanidloes High school is an 11-18 mixed, community school maintained by Powys Unitary Authority (UA). There is shared use of the campus by the school and a primary school. There are currently 787 pupils on roll with 123 in the sixth form, compared with 770 at the time of the last inspection in May 2003 when there were 86 students in the sixth form. The pupil population has increased marginally since the last inspection.
- 2 The school is situated in the small rural town of Llanidloes in the west of the county and serves a large, mainly rural catchment area. About 75% of the pupils come from rural areas surrounding Llanidloes and travel to school by bus. The school's background is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged.
- 3 Pupils of all abilities are received by the school. Within the last few years, there is a significant reading issue with pupils on entry to the school. The school has two special units: one for pupils with specific learning difficulties (SLD) and another for pupils with Asperger's Syndrome (ASD). There are 42 pupils with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and a further 48 have been identified as needing some support. Forty-seven pupils are disapplied from the National Curriculum (NC). There are two pupils "looked after" by the local authority and one pupil who is dual registered.
- 4 About 7% of the pupils speak Welsh as a first language or to an equivalent standard within the school. One pupil receives support teaching in English as an additional language. Llanidloes is a heavily anglicised rural area with relatively poor transport network links and few local employment opportunities.
- 5 The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 1984. The composition of the senior management team (SMT) includes the headteacher and two deputy headteachers. The addition of a further three assistant headteachers makes up the leadership group (LG).
- 6 Vocationally-based courses at key stage (KS) 4 are available to pupils.

The school's priorities and targets

- 7 The school's mission statement is: Giving Opportunities for All to Learn (GOFAL). The school's priority is to enable pupils of all abilities and backgrounds to achieve their full potential - academically, socially and personally - within the context of a school designated to deliver some bilingual education.
- 8 The school has prepared a detailed one-year school improvement plan (SIP) and a brief three-year strategic plan. The one-year SIP for 2008-2009 identifies areas for development in each of Estyn's seven key questions and in the entire sub sections associated with these seven key questions. The three-year strategic plan is concise and focuses on one or two issues in relation to standards, teaching and learning, the curriculum and resources.

- 9 The school also sets numerical targets for success at the end of KS3 and KS4 that, in 2009:
- 72% of pupils should reach at least level 5, in teachers' assessments in all core subjects combined, at the end of KS3 (English 77%, Welsh 77%, mathematics 78%, science 85%); and
 - in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations, 66% of pupils should gain at least five GCSE grades A*-C, and 94% gain at least five GCSE grades A*-G.
- 10 The percentage of 15 year olds targeted for 2009:

Level 2 threshold - (L2 E or W1 & M) (a volume of qualifications at level 2 equivalent to five GCSE grades A*-C including English or Welsh first language and mathematics)	50%
Level 2 threshold - (L2) (a volume of qualifications at level 2 equivalent to five GCSE grades A*-C)	66%
Level 1 threshold - (L1) (a volume of qualifications at level 1 equivalent to five GCSE grades A*-G)	94%
Core subject indicator (CSI)	50%
Leaving full time education without a recognised qualification	0%
Average wider points' score (AWPS) (not percentage)	388

- 11 The percentage of 17 year olds targeted for 2009:

Level 3 threshold – (L3) (a volume of qualifications at level 3 equivalent to two GCE A level grades A-E)	100%
AWPS (not percentage)	664

Summary

- 12 Llanidloes High school is a school with many good features. The school has responded appropriately to the few key issues noted in the 2003 inspection report. The inspection team agrees with two of the judgements made by the school in its self-evaluation report but has awarded lower grades in the other five key questions.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

- 13 Results in tests, statutory assessments and examinations are good overall. Based on prior attainment, pupils' achievement is well above what was expected in KS3 but well below what was expected in KS4. In 2008, examination results in KS4 are above the national averages in all indicators. In the sixth form, the percentage of students achieving an A-E grade in two or more Advanced (A) level subjects is above the national average.

STANDARDS IN KEY SKILLS	KS3 GRADES		KS4 GRADES		SIXTH FORM GRADES	
	WELSH	ENGLISH	WELSH	ENGLISH	WELSH	ENGLISH
Speaking	2	2	2	2	2	2
Listening	2	2	2	2	2	2
Reading	2	2	2	2	2	2
Writing	2	2	2	2	2	2
Numeracy	2		2		2	
ICT	2		2		2	
Creative & Problem Solving	2		2		2	
Improving Own Learning	2		2		2	
Working With Others	2		2		2	

- 14 Standards are good in all six key skills in each key stage. Pupils' and students' bilingual skills are good. Learners are able to discuss issues well amongst themselves and with their teachers. They are able to transfer their linguistic skills from one language to the other well.
- 15 Pupils with SEN and those with other learning difficulties make very good progress in relation to their ability.
- 16 Pupils' behaviour is good and pupils are courteous. The school is a community where most pupils and students have positive attitudes towards their work. Most learners strive to achieve their very best. Attendance levels are good and are above the attendance levels of similar schools in Wales. Most pupils are punctual to lessons. Standards in learners' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are good in KS3 and KS4. In the sixth form, standards of students' social and moral skills are outstanding and their spiritual and cultural skills are good.

The quality of education and training

- 17 Teaching is good. There are good working relationships between teachers and learners. Pupils and students listen well and most members of staff have high expectations.
- 18 There is pace and challenge in most lessons and a wide range of resources are used well. Teachers have a very good grasp of their subject knowledge and key skills are used effectively in lessons.
- 19 The quality of teaching in all the lessons observed by the inspectors is better than the national average as reported in Estyn's annual report. The grades are shown in the grid below:

45 lessons observed	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
All-Wales 07/08	20%	60%	18%	2%	0%

- 20 The quality of marking is variable across the school. Written comments in exercise books are not always diagnostic and lack clear guidance to learners on how to improve. The school has improved its system for tracking pupils' progress and identifying underachievement. The majority of faculties set subject targets which are realistic. Learners are becoming more involved in the self-assessment process, particularly in KS4 and the sixth form.
- 21 The school's curriculum satisfies legal requirements for pupils of statutory school age. It offers a wide range of subjects, including vocational courses, to its pupils in KS4. Sixth-form students also have a comprehensive range of academic options available. The curriculum is accessible to all and provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to gain qualifications. The development of entrepreneurial skills in KS4 and the sixth form is good.
- 22 The arrangements for assisting pupils to transfer from one key stage to another are good and outstanding from KS4 to the sixth form. There are effective curricular links which help pupils with transition from primary to secondary education.
- 23 The outstanding ranges of extra-curricular activities which are provided by the school enrich learners' personal development. Many pupils also benefit from the wide range of cultural activities available.
- 24 Partnerships with other organisations are good. There are good links with parents. Businesses provide work-experience opportunities for all Year (Y) 10 pupils and Y12/13 students. Outside speakers contribute well to the development of students' personal and social skills in the sixth form. The careers service contributes effectively to the options' process in Y9 and Y11.
- 25 The school contributes successfully to the well-being of its pupils. The canteen provides a daily menu of healthy foods and there are no vending machines in the school. Physical activities are well supported. The school has been awarded the "Green Flag" award for being successfully involved in sustainability issues.
- 26 The ways in which the school plans and manages care arrangements and support services are outstanding.
- 27 Academic support by heads of year and form tutors is good. This is supplemented in the sixth form by additional personal tutors to meet the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) requirements. Pupils receive individual attention to monitor their progress.
- 28 Support of high quality is provided for pupils with SEN from teachers and learning support assistants (LSAs). Teachers diagnose pupils' needs carefully and implement effective support strategies to improve pupils' literacy skills.
- 29 Overall, the school's provision for equal opportunities is good. No discrimination or unpleasant behaviour is tolerated. Poor behaviour is dealt with effectively in most cases by the social inclusion officers. Child protection procedures are well documented.
- 30 The school council is an effective body and it contributes appropriately to life within the school.

Leadership and management

- 31 The quality of management is variable. The SMT does not always ensure that policies given to staff are carried out consistently. Monitoring by SMT and those

- with management responsibilities is too variable to ensure that standards are raised consistently. The work and expectations of senior managers are not clearly defined and in some instances there are no clear lines of accountability.
- 32 The quality of planning for improvement and the setting of rigorous targets for improvement lack consistency. There is some very good practice evident in some middle management but this is not currently shared sufficiently enough with other members of staff.
- 33 The governing body's role as critical friend is developing. The monitoring of standards and procedures is improving. The school prospectus does not include all regulatory information.
- 34 The school has an appropriate number of qualified staff to meet curricular and administrative needs. Teachers who teach outside their own subject areas receive good support. Staff development is a priority within the school. Senior and middle managers do not have adequate time to undertake their strategic or monitoring responsibilities effectively. Not all teaching members of staff are deployed economically when they are involved in teaching small groups.
- 35 Overall, the quality of accommodation is good. There is a central library to develop pupils' and students' independent learning skills further. The provision of appropriate and up-to-date information and communications technology (ICT) resources across the school has been beneficial to all learners. The school's finances are well managed. Sufficient finance is available to departments to meet the needs of teaching staff and pupils.
- 36 Due to the good examination results, quality of teaching, support for pupils, good behaviour of most learners, breadth of the curriculum, including the outstanding range of extra-curricular activities, the school provides good value for money.
- 37 The comprehensive education and opportunities provided by the school ensure that its provision meets the needs of the full range of its pupils and students.
- 38 The provision of sixth-form education is cost-effective.

Recommendations

In order to achieve its objectives, the school should focus on the following priorities:

- *R1. Raise standards further by strengthening assessment procedures and improving the quality of advice given to pupils and students across the school to ensure that they are fully aware of what is required to improve their own performance.
- *R2. Define more clearly the roles and responsibilities of the SMT to ensure that there is greater involvement and accountability to:
- ensure greater consistency and rigour in the quality of line-management of faculties and year teams;
 - focus on monitoring standards and also on the quality of teaching and learning; and
 - utilise the findings of the monitoring to raise standards.

- R3. Allocate additional time to members of the leadership group and to middle managers and develop their roles to:
- ensure greater accountability;
 - co-ordinate assessment for learning strategies; and
 - promote good features to all staff by sharing good practice regularly.
- *R4. Improve the processes of self-evaluation and planning for improvement at all levels to ensure that developments are effectively prioritised, monitored, evaluated and supported.
- R5. Enhance the monitoring role of the governors and ensure that all regulations regarding the school prospectus are met.

** The SIP addresses several of these recommendations.*

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

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

KS3 and KS4

Pupils' success in attaining agreed learning goals

- 40 Overall results in teacher assessments at KS3 and external examination results in KS4 demonstrate that standards have good features and no important shortcomings. The standards of pupils' work in KS3 and KS4 are good.
- 41 Results in teacher assessments at the end of KS3 are good. Overall, attainment had improved in English and Welsh first language in 2008 compared with the previous year. English and mathematics were in the top half of results in comparison with those of similar schools in Wales, based on the free school meals' indicator, and results in Welsh first language, science and the CSI were in the top quarter.
- 42 Achievement at KS3 is well above what is expected, based on prior attainment at KS2, in the three core subjects combined, and in each of them individually.
- 43 At KS4 in the GCSE examinations in 2008, 96% of pupils achieved the level 1 threshold (a volume of qualifications at level 1 equivalent to five GCSE grades A*-G). This is above the local and the national average. The school was placed in the top half of results in comparison with those of similar schools in Wales.
- 44 Seventy-one per cent of pupils achieved the level 2 threshold (a volume of qualifications at level 2 equivalent to five GCSE grades A*-C) in 2008. This represented a five percentage points' rise from the previous year and is above the local and well above the national average. In 2008 the school was placed in the top half of results in comparison with those of similar schools in Wales.

- 45 Fifty-seven per cent of pupils achieved the level 2 threshold (a volume of qualifications at level 2 equivalent to five GCSE grades A*-C including mathematics and English or Welsh first language). This is marginally above the local and well above the national average. In 2008, the school was placed in the top half of results in comparison with those of similar schools in Wales. Attainment levels in mathematics had a negative impact on this indicator.
- 46 The school's AWPS in 2008 was higher than the local and national average. The school was placed in the top half of results in comparison with those of similar schools in Wales.
- 47 Nearly 28% of pupils gained the A*/A grades in the GCSE examinations in 2008.
- 48 However, achievement at KS4 is below what is expected, based on prior attainment at KS3.
- 49 Girls outperformed boys in English, Welsh first language and the CSI in the end of KS3 assessments in 2008. The difference was significant in Welsh first language.
- 50 At KS4 in the GCSE examinations in 2008, girls marginally outperformed boys in threshold level 1 and both threshold level 2 indicators.

Their progress in learning

- 51 Pupils' progress in nearly all lessons is good.
- 52 In KS3 and KS4 all key skills have standards which are at least good with no important shortcomings.
- 53 Pupils' communication skills in Welsh have good features and no important shortcomings in both key stages.
- 54 Most pupils are entered for examination in the Welsh first or second language course and achieve good standards.
- 55 The standards of pupils' bilingual skills have good features and no important shortcomings.
- 56 Pupils with SEN make very good progress in relation to their ability. In KS3 and KS4, many pupils of low ability achieve their potential.
- 57 The standards of achievement of able and talented pupils are good.
- 58 A minority of learners do not fully understand how well they are progressing and what they need to do to improve. The quality of feedback to learners does not always fully inform them about their strengths and weaknesses and how to improve.
- 59 A minority of pupils in KS4 do not achieve their expected potential because they do not produce work of good quality.
- 60 In many of the classes and subjects, pupils make good progress towards the targets which they have been set.

The development of their personal, social and learning skills

- 61 Most pupils behave well in both key stages. They understand the expectations which the school has of them, both in terms of work and in terms of their

behaviour and attitudes. These aspects make positive contributions to pupils' learning. During the inspection pupils were courteous and respectful.

- 62 The school is an orderly, caring and an inclusive community. During the last academic year, only 14 pupils were temporarily excluded and no pupil was permanently excluded. Nearly all of these exclusions were attributed to boys with the majority being in KS4.
- 63 The attendance level for pupils of compulsory school age at the school for three complete terms prior to the inspection is 92.6%. This is above the all-Wales figure of 90.9% for 2008 and above the attendance rates of similar schools in Wales taking into account their free school meals' entitlement for 2007-2008. It is also above Powys UA's attendance figure of 91.4%. Pupils' attendance and punctuality to lessons are good.
- 64 Nearly all pupils make good progress in their personal, social, moral and wider development. Values are at the heart of the school which expects high standards of behaviour. Pupils gain much in their spiritual and moral development from the good quality assemblies and the daily acts of collective worship evident during the tutorial sessions. The religious education periods and the personal and social education (PSE) programmes contribute well to pupils' moral and spiritual development.
- 65 The effective development of pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural skills ensures that standards in these skills are good. Many pupils take advantage of the wide range of extra-curricular activities provided in sport, clubs, performances and visits both home and abroad. These activities contribute well to pupils' social and cultural development. Many pupils have good social skills and engage confidently with visitors. The Welsh cultural dimension is evident throughout the curriculum.
- 66 Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of equality of opportunity. They have a good grasp of work-related issues and have good skills that enable them to progress to further education or employment.
- 67 The way in which pupils are prepared for participation in the workplace and community in KS4 is good.

Sixth form

Students' success in attaining agreed learning goals

- 68 Overall, standards of attainment in the A level examinations have been good over the last three years.
- 69 However, results at A level are below those recorded in the previous inspection. Students' successes at two A level grades A-C have been above national averages for the last three years.
- 70 In 2008, 96% of students achieved the Level 3 threshold. This was slightly below the local average of 97% of students achieving the Level 3 threshold but above the national average of 94%.
- 71 Students' AWPS of 684 points was below the local average (698) but above the national average (631).
- 72 Girls substantially outperformed boys in the AWPS in 2008.

- 73 In September 2008, only 49% of Y11 pupils progressed to the sixth form and 39% left school to continue their studies in further education (FE) where the opportunities to study vocational subjects were greater.

Their progress in learning

- 74 The majority of students make good progress during their period of study in the sixth form but a minority of students do not achieve their full potential at the end of the key stage.
- 75 Currently, no students gain qualifications in any of the six key skills in the sixth form.
- 76 Good progress is being made in the development of students' standards in key skills, all of which have good features and no important shortcomings. Students are articulate and confident in using extended speech. Most are able to write extensively with a good level of technical accuracy. Students read widely and use ICT facilities for research purposes to improve the standards of their work.
- 77 The standards of most students' communication skills through the medium of Welsh have good features and no important shortcomings. Students' ability to think and work bilingually is good.
- 78 The majority of students have a clear understanding of their levels of achievement and what they have to do to improve from the verbal and written feedback they receive.

The development of their personal, social and learning skills

- 79 Students have developed very positive attitudes to learning.
- 80 Students use study facilities appropriately to ensure that they achieve success in their chosen pathways. Many organise their work well, without supervision.
- 81 They accept responsibility easily and have a strong social conscience raising money for charity. They also help in the community.
- 82 They are good role models for younger pupils and to one another. Their leadership skills are very good. This has enabled them to strengthen the relationships between senior and junior pupils. They support younger pupils experiencing difficulties, socially or academically.
- 83 Standards of students' social and moral skills are outstanding and their spiritual and cultural skills are good. Students assist in raising the spiritual standards of others by contributing constructively in school assemblies.
- 84 Students demonstrate responsible behaviour and respect towards one another and towards all members of the school community. They also assist in ensuring that younger pupils behave responsibly during break times by their presence around the school. They gain in maturity during their period of study in the sixth form and have a valuable experience.
- 85 Students are able to express views openly and honestly. They listen carefully to the view of others.
- 86 All students in Y12 have adopted and developed skills through the WBQ. These skills have prepared them well for Higher Education (HE).

- 87 Attendance is monitored sensibly and students are developing good working habits. Attendance and punctuality to lessons are generally good.
- 88 Students gain much from their sixth-form experiences, in their academic, personal, social, moral and wider development.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 89 This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.
- 90 The following grades were awarded for the quality of teaching in the 45 lessons observed overall in the school during the inspection:

Quality of teaching	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Whole school (45 lessons)	20%	60%	18%	2%	0%
All-Wales 07/08	17%	58%	22%	3%	0%

- 91 In this inspection, the quality of teaching in 80% of lessons in the school was judged to be a grade 1 and 2. This percentage is higher than the national picture in 2007-08 where 75% of lessons were judged to be grades 1 or 2. This figure equals the Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG's) "Vision into Action" target for 2010, that the quality of teaching should be a grade 2 or better in 80% of lessons. Ninety-eight per cent of the lessons were graded 1, 2 or 3 in line with WAG's target.

KS3 and KS4

How well teaching and training meet the needs of learners and the curriculum or course requirements

- 92 The grades awarded for the quality of teaching in the 39 lessons observed overall in KS3 and KS4 were:

Quality of teaching	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	16%	64%	16%	4%	0%
KS4	21%	58%	21%	0%	0%
KS3 and KS4	18%	62%	18%	2%	0%

- 93 There is a higher percentage of grade 3 lessons in KS4. The quality of teaching is variable across and within subjects in this key stage.
- 94 Teachers know the pupils well as individuals and provide pupils with effective support. They are aware of the specific needs of pupils but some lessons are disturbed by a minority of pupils. These pupils did not meet the high expectations of behaviour evident in the school.
- 95 Nearly a fifth of lessons observed had outstanding features (grade 1). These were characterised by:
- sound subject knowledge of teachers;
 - a variety of opportunities to improve thinking and learning skills;
 - penetrating questioning techniques;

- clear structured lessons, with precise and appropriate timing for tasks and activities;
- effective use of praise to encourage pupils to take an active part in the lesson;
- positive and constructive relationships that existed between teachers and pupils; and
- tasks designed to meet the needs of all pupils.

96 Many of these features were present, to a varying degree, in the lessons where there were good features and no important shortcomings (grade 2). In these lessons there was good pace, lessons were well prepared, activities and practical work were evident, and individual pupils were well supported. Relationships were good but plenary sessions were less developed. Furthermore, some lessons became too teacher led and pupils had little opportunity to contribute orally.

97 In a few lessons, good features outweigh shortcomings (grade 3). In these lessons valuable opportunities were lost or were not sufficiently developed. The pace of the lesson was too brisk to be helpful and insufficient guidance was given to some pupils to enable them to fully engage in the lesson. Timing of these lessons adversely affected progress and the end of the lesson was not sufficiently developed.

98 Nearly all lessons began with the sharing of lesson objectives. Progress towards these objectives was usefully reviewed at the end. Resources were used to good effect to consolidate learning and this contributed to the overall success of the lesson.

99 Learning support assistants were used well and made valuable contributions to the progress of many pupils. These assistants kept a brief record of the work covered by the pupils.

100 All pupils were treated equally. Teachers actively and successfully promoted equality of learning. Teachers met learners' individual needs and monitored and reviewed their progress effectively.

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

101 Procedures and practices for the assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' achievements have good features and no important shortcomings. The procedures meet the statutory requirements with regard to assessment and reporting on NC subjects and conform to the requirements of the examination boards in KS4 and the sixth form. The school conforms to the assessment requirements for pupils and students with SEN.

102 Procedures for standardising the quality of pupils' work in some departments are developing effectively. The good practice between the school and the partner primary schools to discuss standards of work at KS2 and KS3 is a means of promoting better understanding with regards to the standardisation of learners' work. In some subject areas there is good use of portfolios to standardise the work of the pupils.

103 The school has a detailed assessment policy that offers clear guidance to faculties to develop their own assessment policies. Every department has

created a policy to cover assessment, but, as yet, these are inconsistent and not all are fit for purpose. Faculty link members of the SMT are not sufficiently rigorous in monitoring these procedures which are part of their responsibilities.

- 104 The school has established an appropriate computerised system to store the data created on assessment. The data held are available to all members of staff. They are comprehensive and include KS2 teacher assessments as well as standardised external results. This information is used to determine individual pupils' targets for the subjects studied and these are shared with the parents. The data collected are also used to determine subject targets for KS3 results and GCSE examinations. The individual pupil targets generated annually are reviewed before being used to generate further subject data.
- 105 However, the data created do not provide sufficient challenge to the subjects. Currently, targets set by departments to raise standards are variable. In addition, the monitoring process lacks rigour and does not respond effectively to dealing with underachievement.
- 106 The process of monitoring progress against target grades has not been fully embedded and developed across the school. The school does not check the targets of individual departments rigorously enough. There are some good practices with regard to targeting groups of pupils who are underachieving and effective additional support is offered by heads of year through interviews and daily monitoring of these pupils. In many cases, this involves parents who are regularly informed by the school of the progress made by their child.
- 107 Generally, the work of pupils is marked regularly. In the best examples, there are constructive comments with subject-specific advice on what to do to improve. In a significant number of lessons, there is a lack of consistency in the quality of comments within and across departments. The exercise books of pupils are examined by the headteacher and one of the deputy headteachers to evaluate the quality and frequency of marking and the usefulness of comments made by the teachers. However, this monitoring practice is not followed up frequently enough within the school. The quality of marking is less effective in KS3.
- 108 The quality of guidance pupils receive for self-assessment and peer-assessment to improve their understanding of the work varies from subject to subject. In some subjects there is good practice with clear guidance given to pupils and expectations are clear and assessment criteria are shared with the pupils. Currently, these good practices have not been developed sufficiently across faculties nor used regularly as a means of raising standards.
- 109 Annual and interim reports to parents provide adequate information on the academic and personal development of individual pupils. The interim reports include target and effort grades in the subjects studied. Full reports include similar information as well as comments on the progress made in the subjects being studied. However, neither are these comments always subject-specific nor do they contain specific advice on what the pupils need to do to improve. The target grades are based on KS3 levels or GCSE grades.

Sixth form

How well teaching and training meet the needs of learners and the curriculum or course requirements

110 The quality of teaching is good with no important shortcomings in the sixth form. The following table shows the grades awarded for the quality of teaching in the six lessons observed in the sixth form:

Quality of teaching	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Sixth form	33%	50%	17%	0%	0%

111 Many of the outstanding and good features in the teaching in the sixth form are similar to those seen in lessons in KS3 and KS4. Additional features of the outstanding teaching are the opportunities students receive to develop a range of key skills through the WBQ. In these lessons, expectations with regard to standards of work are well developed to motivate and challenge the students.

112 Good features of teaching include:

- constructive working relationship between the teachers and students; and
- effective use of resources.

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

113 In a number of cases, assignments are closely marked and graded with diagnostic comments. Examination criteria are utilised in the process. Structured self-assessment exists in many subjects with opportunities for the students to improve their own learning and performance. Targets are set in all subjects. Good use is made of self-assessment and peer-assessment to ensure complete understanding. However, in some subjects, there is no evidence of focussed comments or precise target-setting in the work completed.

114 The quality of the information parents receive on students' progress is adequate. Reports to parents include predicted grades in addition to more general information. The quality of subject comments is variable since they are not always subject-specific. There is insufficient detail on what has to be done to improve and this has an adverse effect on the overall progress of the students.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

115 The school awarded itself a grade 1 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is one grade lower. The team judged that, with the exception of the extra-curricular dimension, there were insufficient outstanding features to award the question a grade 1.

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

116 The curriculum is mainly broad and balanced and offers appropriate progression through the key stages in many subjects. It provides nearly all pupils full access to a range of academic and vocational courses in KS4 and offers opportunities for all pupils to gain qualifications. In KS4 the curriculum provides the breadth of opportunity in line with the requirements of the learning core.

- 117 The curriculum meets course and legal requirements, including the daily act of collective worship.
- 118 However, Key Elements 1-3 (an individual learning pathway/wider choice and flexibility/the Learning Core) of the Learning Pathways' programme are under-developed since collaborative working with other schools and Coleg Powys is limited. Progression routes for pupils to continue their studies in the sixth form in vocational subjects and through the medium of Welsh are very limited.
- 119 The school has carefully planned the content and delivery of its basic and key skills' programmes, which have been enhanced in the sixth form by the introduction of the WBQ. These skills are given appropriate emphasis in all departmental schemes of work (SoW) and in the school's comprehensive PSE programme at each key stage. External accreditation of the key skills has not been introduced although plans are well advanced to accredit ICT in Y9 and all key skills through the WBQ in Y12.
- 120 There is an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities which enrich and broaden pupils' learning experiences. Pupils are provided with opportunities to participate in:
- a range of very successful sporting and musical activities;
 - school visits and exchanges encompassing a wide variety of experiences including theatre and museum visits; and
 - a wide spectrum of outdoor and community projects through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and other programmes.
- 121 The school's curricular and extra-curricular activities play a significant role in promoting pupils' personal development. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is a strength of the school. It is a planned feature of the school's cross-curricular work and delivered through the effective PSE programme and its effective collective worship and statutory religious education programmes. Pupils show respect for each other and mix well socially within a caring environment. Pupils display a sound awareness of different cultures. The relationship between staff and pupils is consistently good.
- 122 The school has established a number of robust and positive partnerships. These embrace:
- close, effective working relationships with parents;
 - effective curricular and pastoral links with partner primary schools;
 - valuable links with industry and business; and
 - strong relationships with Careers Wales and other outside agencies.
- 123 The school has developed beneficial links with Aberystwyth University to train, monitor and support student teachers successfully in a range of subjects.

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

- 124 There is a good work-related education (WRE) programme delivered with support from Careers Wales. The partnerships with local industry and business ensure that all Y10 pupils and Y12/13 students undertake work placements of good quality which meet individual needs. Learners are very well prepared for

the world of work. All pupils are trained in the use of the Careers Wales on-line web-site.

- 125 The school provides equality of access and opportunity for all learners. No learners are excluded from any aspects of the curricular programme on the grounds of ability, ethnicity or disability. Provision for pupils disapplied from the NC in the unit staffed and financed by UA is very good. The key skills' programme contributes significantly in providing pupils with the tools to develop their self-esteem and confidence positively.
- 126 The school has formulated a rigorous programme for the development of its sustainable development initiatives through its Eco-School's committee. It has achieved the 'Green Flag' status. The school's commitment to promoting education for sustainable development and global citizenship (ESDGC) is clearly demonstrated by its appearance as a standing item on school improvement group (SIG) and staff agendas.
- 127 The school promotes aspects of bilingualism through its curricular and extra-curricular activities. It has carried out an audit of the 'Cwricwlwm Cymreig' and is appropriately planned into departmental SoWs. The quality of the provision in both languages in all aspects of the school's educational programmes is good.
- 128 However, avenues to increase the use of incidental Welsh in its everyday activities are limited.
- 129 Entrepreneurial activities in the sixth form are promoted successfully within elements of the WBQ. Year 9 and Y10 pupils are effectively introduced to aspects of enterprise through the organisation of an 'enterprise week' and the Dynamo Project. These activities make a significant contribution to pupils' problem-solving and decision-making skills. The development of enterprise activities in KS3 is limited.
- 130 The broad range of learning opportunities and experiences, the introduction of the WBQ, the emphasis on basic and key skills, the extra-curricular programme, the WRE activities and learners' involvement in the community ensure that learners receive the appropriate experiences to lay the foundation for life-long learning.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 131 The school awarded itself a grade 1 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is one grade lower. Although many good aspects were identified, only one aspect was judged to be outstanding.

The quality of care, support and guidance to learners

- 132 The school's very effective approach to planning and managing its care and support arrangements is an outstanding feature. The school draws upon a wide range of support services to ensure pupils' needs are carefully assessed and addressed. This is particularly beneficial for pupils with SEN and those in challenging or vulnerable circumstances. In spite of its rural location, the school is able to fast-track the outside support and service agencies. All are used very effectively to assist pupils.

- 133 The school provides a warm, caring and supportive ethos. Pupils express high levels of satisfaction with the help and support they receive from teachers and other adults working at the school.
- 134 The school enjoys close and effective working partnerships with parents and carers. These partnerships contribute significantly to the quality of guidance offered to pupils. The school operates an effective home/school agreement. The prospectus provides a good overview of the school's aims and procedures. A parents' handbook offers a good comprehensive guide of the school's work and the school website is another source of information. The school listens to parents and carers and their views are well considered and acted upon. There is very good liaison with parents whose child's attendance or behaviour gives rise for concern.
- 135 The school council is an effective forum where pupils can raise their opinions about issues that affect them. Pupils feel confident that their views are listened to and acted upon and this gives them a sense of responsibility.
- 136 Parents and pupils receive good information about the choices and options available to them. An informative option-choice booklet, pupil interviews, parents' evenings and careers-education programmes enable pupils to make appropriate choices. Sixth-form students receive good advice on subject choices, careers applications to university and higher education through a well-organised programme. The good links with local employers enhance the guidance pupils receive.
- 137 The school has two accredited learning coaches who provide valuable support to KS4 pupils.
- 138 There are close links with the partner primary schools to ensure effective transition arrangements. The KS2/KS3 transition plan is evaluated for its effectiveness. Pupils' positive comments reflect the good pastoral and curricular links that exist. Pupils with SEN are well known to the school before they arrive. There is a very good quality induction programme in Y12 and a sixth-form group works alongside Y7 pupils to ensure they settle into their new school with ease.
- 139 Pupils have access to an effective PSE programme, which is in-line with national recommendations. It contributes well to the quality of support and guidance. Inputs from outside agencies enhance the quality of the PSE programme.
- 140 Effective procedures are in place to monitor pupils' attendance, punctuality, behaviour and performance. The school responds quickly to any situation giving cause for concern. The input from the education welfare officer, the social inclusion officer and the two ex-police officers who manage the behaviour support unit has had a positive impact on improving attendance and reducing the number of exclusions.
- 141 Pupils receive careers education and guidance of good quality which takes account of the national framework. Good links with outside agencies enhance this provision.
- 142 The deputy headteacher is the designated member of staff with responsibility for child protection. Members of staff are familiar with the school's referral procedure through the child protection policy and staff handbook. All members of SEN teaching staff and LSAs have received up-to-date training on child

protection procedures from external agencies. However, not all members of staff at the school have been recently trained.

- 143 The school has good knowledge of individual pupils and has effective procedures in place to promote and ensure the health, safety and well-being of pupils. However, the school is only in the early stages of implementing the Healthy Schools' initiative.

The quality of provision for additional learning needs

- 144 The provision for pupils with SEN is good and fully meets the requirements of the Wales Code of Practice.
- 145 The wide-ranging provision for the pupils identified is a priority and a strong feature and is very well managed by the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO).
- 146 The identification and assessment of pupils with SEN are thorough and result from the school's good links with its partner primary schools and on the results of an appropriate range of screening tests on entry in Y7.
- 147 The school has a comprehensive, informative SEN policy in place that is fully operational.
- 148 The SEN register and records are kept fully up-to-date. They are working documents, the details of which are used successfully to track the progress of individual pupils and provide appropriate support.
- 149 The school recognises the diversity of pupils' needs and promotes inclusive education effectively. Pupils on the SEN register work successfully alongside their peers in mainstream classes. Good planning enables them to experience successes at appropriate levels. Great care is taken to ensure that they are happy and well integrated into school life.
- 150 Arrangements for annual reviews are very good, the requirements are complied with and nearly all parents attend. The school is successful in meeting the targets identified at the time of the annual reviews.
- 151 Pupils who are on the SEN register are supported well by individual education plans (IEPs). Their short term-targets are regularly reviewed and give all teachers valuable information about the specific nature of each child's difficulty and when appropriate a pupil profile is attached.
- 152 Learning Support Assistants work very effectively with pupils with SEN and they are fully aware of pupils' targets and respond effectively to their needs. They have all received appropriate training and have well-organised routines. They give a clear focus on developing their roles and experiences both as individuals and as a team.
- 153 The working relationships between mainstream teachers and LSAs are very positive and constructive. These links are strengthened by SEN issues being itemised on the agenda of meetings and the SENCO is present in these meetings. A valuable guide to effective use of LSAs for mainstream staff has been produced by the school.
- 154 Teachers adapt the curriculum to enable pupils of all abilities to succeed including the more able and gifted. Pupils with ASD and specific learning difficulties are given the support needed to sit examinations that lead to external

qualifications. At KS4, GCSE and Entry level examinations are available to all pupils on the SEN register and all pupils achieve success with some outstanding results being achieved.

- 155 The school provides very effective support through its policies and practices for those pupils whose behaviour impedes their progress and the progress of others.

The quality of provision for equal opportunities

- 156 The quality of provision for equal opportunities is good. The positive and inclusive nature of the school is a strong feature. All pupils are given sensitive and effective support if problems arise at school. The good practice observed is actively supported by policies which are monitored and reviewed.
- 157 Gender stereotyping is actively discouraged, with pupils having access to all areas of the curriculum and school activities. All sporting and extra-curricular activities are attended by boys and girls. Gender stereotyping is challenged effectively in guidance about subject choices as pupils move from KS3 to KS4.
- 158 The school has coherent policies and strategies to deal with issues of racial harassment. Few racial incidents have been recorded and if reported the UA is informed. Issues are covered in assemblies and across many curricular areas and pupils show sensitivity to the issues raised.
- 159 Pupils interviewed, including those on the school council, stated that little bullying was evident within the school. Any incidents that occur are taken seriously and dealt with quickly and effectively. The school has a very comprehensive anti-bullying policy. The whole-school community knows and understands the anti-bullying procedures.
- 160 The school has a comprehensive Disability Equality Scheme and a three-year action plan. However, while the school has taken action to ensure that any disabled pupils do not suffer from less favourable treatment, the school buildings make it difficult to provide full access for disabled learners.
- 161 The school recognises and respects diversity and racial equality within society and works successfully to widen pupils' understanding of other cultures through the curriculum, assemblies, the annual visit to the school by the African choir and a staff member's link with Lesotho. Pupils have a good understanding of diversity and value the contributions of others. The level of support for both local and national charities reinforces further the importance of promoting diversity and respecting others.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

- 162 The school awarded itself a grade 1 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is two grades lower because good features outweigh shortcomings. The grade is also one grade lower than the grades awarded for Key Questions 1 and 7. The shortcomings relate to:
- a lack of clarity and accountability in the job descriptions of the SMT;

- inadequate formal arrangements to monitor the performance of staff and teams;
- a lack of management time for all leaders; and
- insufficient rigorous monitoring by governors.

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

- 163 The school has taken into account some national priorities. The school is currently working closely with the UA's 14-19 Learning Pathways' co-ordinator to develop and meet WAG's 14-19 agenda. All students in Y12 follow the WBQ and the skills' agenda is being successfully developed in Y7/8. The school has achieved the "Green Flag" award for its endeavours with sustainability projects.
- 164 The school ensures the professional development of teaching, administrative and technical staff well. The programme for the induction of newly-qualified teachers, and teachers new to the school is well organised and managed.
- 165 The school has a system of performance management with each member of the teaching staff being given three agreed targets. The process is undertaken in accordance with performance management requirements.
- 166 However, performance management arrangements for administrative and technical staff have not been developed.
- 167 Whilst the majority of members of staff have embraced the need to move forward quickly on a number of initiatives, for the benefit of pupils' learning, this commitment to change is not entirely corporate.
- 168 The SIG gives a clear sense of direction to the school. Heads of faculties are directly involved with this group but heads of department are not directly involved in open consultation at an early stage in devising or contributing effectively to policies which determine the strategic direction of the school. The monitoring of the strategies is not rigorous enough.
- 169 There are shared aims amongst leaders, teachers and support staff but they do not focus enough on continuously improving the effectiveness of learning and teaching. These values are promoted, but not consistently enough by senior and middle managers. Monitoring systems are informal.
- 170 The headteacher and his SMT of two deputy headteachers are supported by three assistant headteachers to form the LG. However, their monitoring roles are not fully developed due to a lack of adequate time. All have high teaching commitments and the three assistant headteachers have other senior posts of responsibility within the school. These factors restrict their ability to quality assure effectively and raise standards in areas of strategic importance.
- 171 The effectiveness of this team to undertake all its responsibilities is also constrained as some members continue to undertake a few administrative functions.
- 172 The job descriptions of senior managers require updating and greater clarity to ensure that individuals are fully aware of their responsibilities and the degree to which they are to be held accountable. The overall responsibility for learning and teaching has not been delegated to a specific member of the LG.

- 173 Each member of the SMT, including the headteacher, is linked to faculties. The links between SMT and the faculties they line manage, have been developed, but vary in their effectiveness. Some line managers do not attend their link faculty meetings on a regular basis.
- 174 There are inconsistencies amongst faculties for checking the marking of books.
- 175 There is inconsistency in the degree of rigour with which the SMT assures quality and reviews the work of individual faculties. Although there are timetabled faculty review meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher in the Autumn term, there are no formal whole-faculty reviews involving detailed classroom observations on an agreed cycle.
- 176 The management of heads of year, who are responsible mainly for the academic development of the learners, is more consistent in quality.
- 177 Classroom observations of staff and faculties have been undertaken by senior managers and middle managers only in relation to the one lesson required to comply with performance management arrangements. There is no other formal structure to lesson observations.
- 178 Very good features of leadership and management at middle-management levels are evident in a minority of faculties. In these faculties, there is a clear focus on teaching and learning, exemplified by detailed schemes of work, good target-setting practices and good programmes of quality assurance. Middle-managers of high quality are committed to raising standards by monitoring work on a formal and informal basis. However, these good practices are inconsistent. Currently, best practice is not shared sufficiently amongst all staff within the school.
- 179 In some faculties, there is a lack of leadership, and there are shortcomings to be eliminated. There is insufficient rigour in monitoring, and planning for improvement is inadequate.

How well governors or other supervisory bodies meet their responsibilities

- 180 Governors are becoming more involved in the strategic management of the school. The quality of their strategic management and involvement in the evaluation processes are developing. Governors act as a sounding-board to the headteacher.
- 181 The governing body contributes to the leadership of the school but does not monitor the quality of leaders, and managers sufficiently.
- 182 The governing body includes able and experienced members who have supported the school over a number of years, and members recently appointed. Their individual professional expertise is used well in enhancing the curricular and community dimension of the school.
- 183 The governing body has high expectations of the school. All members have a clear understanding of the school's main priorities through the effective working of the sub-committee structure.
- 184 The chair of governors is in regular discussion with the headteacher to ensure that the governing body and the sub-committees work productively for the benefit of the school.

- 185 The governors understand their roles and act as critical friends. This role is developing. Governors are informed on aspects of school performance through the headteacher and the LG. They also receive observations from the various governors who have links with their faculties.
- 186 Governors hold regular termly meetings with faculties to evaluate their improvement plans and examination results in a positive manner. At the end of each cycle of meetings, they evaluate outcomes to see how faculties have responded to their targets. However, the monitoring is not rigorous enough.
- 187 All regulatory requirements are not met. The prospectus does not contain information on the complaints' procedure nor the Disability Equality Scheme.

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

- 188 The school awarded itself a grade 1 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is two grades lower because there are shortcomings. The shortcomings relate to:
- the lack of an effective monitoring system for evaluating and raising standards; and
 - ineffective action planning within faculties for ensuring improvements.

How effectively the school's performance is monitored and evaluated

- 189 The judgements made by the school differ from those awarded by the inspection team in five of the seven key questions. In Key Questions 5 and 6 the inspection team awarded grades that were two grades lower than the school had awarded itself. In Key Questions 3, 4 and 7 the inspection team awarded grades that were one grade lower than the school had awarded itself.
- 190 The school's self-evaluation document is a detailed document following the seven key questions in the Estyn framework. It outlines the perceived good features and areas for development noted by the school.
- 191 Members of the SMT do not fully appreciate their role in formally monitoring the work of the faculties or some of their areas of responsibility. The nature and quality of links between members of the SMT and their faculties are inconsistent. In the best examples, members of SMT regularly attend faculty meetings and work closely with their link faculties to secure quality assurance. However, the good practice which exists does not extend to all faculties. All faculty meeting minutes are sent to the headteacher. He responds where appropriate. This is a good feature.
- 192 Where appropriate, the school has called on outside agencies to provide the school with better appreciation of the quality of provision and standards achieved within specific-subject areas. However, there is no formal system within the school's self-evaluation arrangements, for monitoring at first hand the quality of teaching and learning beyond the prescriptive requirements of performance-related management reviews and the periodic book reviews undertaken by SMT.

- 193 The school takes good account of parental views of the school through a survey. The survey is detailed and provides a sound basis for the school to move forward. The school council is effective in bringing matters to the attention of SMT on a regular basis. The Education/Industry forum makes known the views of local business.
- 194 The standard of faculty self-evaluation reviews is variable. All faculties and the pastoral care team, the SEN department, and the sixth form receive a template and guidance notes for completing a self-evaluation review based on the seven key questions. The data provided by the school to departments are comprehensive. However, the use made by faculties of the data is inconsistent. In the best examples, the faculty analyses examination results in depth and recognises which aspects of work related to examinations need attention. Many faculty reviews lack rigorous evaluation, and do not set out suitable strategies for raising standards.
- 195 There is no effective monitoring system of standards of teaching and learning within the faculties' self-evaluation system. Peer observation by teachers does occur within the school, but on an ad-hoc basis. The process is reliant upon the enthusiasm of individual members of staff.

The effectiveness of planning for improvement

- 196 The contents of the annual school improvement plan (SIP) arranged under the headings of the seven key questions, include national and local priorities as well as issues prioritised within the school. Members of SMT are given responsibility for the implementation of these priorities. These are good features. However, there are too many targets within the SIP to be realistically achievable.
- 197 The school also produces a valuable three-year strategic plan which prioritises the major issues to be addressed for three years with suitable action plans. Both plans are costed.
- 198 The faculties' improvement plans are inconsistent in quality. In the best examples, faculties recognize areas for improvement from their examination data analysis and lesson observations. They note the action to be taken and the expected outcomes; they outline the rigorous strategies to be employed in raising standards; they cost their plans in terms of staffing, money, and resources, and note measurable success criteria within a time frame. Such good practice does not exist in many faculties.
- 199 Progress on the main recommendations of the previous inspection report has been adequate. Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection, and pupils with ASD have better accommodation facilities. The school has made measurable improvement in the attendance rate over the last few years, and it has improved standards for pupils with SEN.

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 200 The school awarded itself a grade 1 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is one grade lower because there were no features deemed to be outstanding. The grade matches the grade awarded to

Key Question 1, and is one grade higher than the grade awarded to Key Question 5. This is because the school succeeds in giving good value for money even though there are shortcomings identified in Key Questions 5 and 6.

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

- 201 The school has a sufficient number of teachers and support staff to deliver the curriculum well. Nearly all teachers are specifically qualified and trained for the particular subjects they teach. There is a good balance between teachers new to the profession and those with longer experience.
- 202 The school follows national guidelines in making Criminal Records Bureau checks on persons dealing with young people.
- 203 Staffing for the support of learners with SEN is good. The team of LSAs is deployed well and provides substantial help for pupils. Clerical and administrative support is effective and well organised, staff being flexible and responsive in their roles. Caretaking, cleaning, and technical support staff fulfil their duties conscientiously to make the best use of available resources.
- 204 Resources for faculties are sufficient. Capitation is allocated according to a formula to give each subject enough books, equipment and materials to teach the curriculum effectively. Heads of faculty confirm that the school has usually met an unforeseen expense after their allocations have been used up.
- 205 The library is well equipped and well used. There are timetabled sessions for younger pupils and all pupils can make use of its facilities for research. The library assistant regularly liaises with subject departments to supply "book boxes" at appropriate times to support activities within the classroom. The library is also used a great deal by learners outside lesson time, including short periods after school.
- 206 Information and communications technology resources are good and have improved since the last inspection. There are sufficient computers both in the library and across the school. The ratio of computers to pupils is better than the average at around 1:3; there are whiteboards and data projectors in all classrooms, with an interactive whiteboard in each faculty.
- 207 The school uses external curricular resources well. These include a good range of visits and foreign travel. The good sports facilities include daytime use of the local leisure centre.
- 208 Accommodation is good in relation to pupil numbers. There are sufficient classrooms and communal areas. Most areas are accessible but a few do not allow for access by mobility-impaired people. The age of the different buildings varies considerably, but an effective programme of maintenance and refurbishment assures their good condition. Good decoration and displays enhance the inside of the school while the school grounds provide an attractive and tranquil environment conducive to learning.

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

- 209 The workload agreement ensures that teachers have the requisite minimum planning, preparation, and assessment time. Most staff use this time effectively.

Workforce remodelling currently complies with at least the minimum statutory requirements in all areas.

- 210 The attachment of assistants to faculties, the creation of the posts of social inclusion officers, and the recruitment of cover supervisors and invigilators reduce many of the burdens previously borne by leaders and managers. This is clearly an ongoing process, and subject to review, as illustrated by their current job descriptions. These include many ancillary tasks, even though these might now be undertaken by others. The school emphasises that it is close to the position which will be required of it by September 2009. The limitations identified in monitoring and evaluating however, indicate that the time available at present to leaders and managers does not allow them to fulfil all their tasks in the most effective way.
- 211 The sixth form enhances the ethos of the school by giving younger learners the support and example of their older peers. It attracts and retains well-qualified staff and allows students to continue their studies to higher levels in their own locality. Partnership arrangements are few, given the nature of the rural area, and those that have been secured contribute little in financial terms to the high costs involved. Due largely to careful organisation of some lessons where Y12 and Y13 are taught together, the sixth-form provision remains cost-effective.
- 212 Financial planning and budgetary controls are good overall. This was confirmed by the last auditors' report. The headteacher and bursar work closely together, and, with the governing body finance committee, ensure that appropriate comparisons are made and spending decisions are considered in depth. Resources are matched to priorities, and the school has managed a modest carry-over. Training and development for all staff is good, although the performance management structures do not currently extend to administrative or technical staff.
- 213 Good care and guidance, curriculum, teaching, and examination results, mean that the school succeeds in giving good value for money.

School's response to the inspection

The Governors and staff are pleased that the inspection team described Llanidloes High as an orderly, caring and an inclusive community (6 + 62). They found that the school gives good value for money and has responded appropriately to the key issues raised in the last Report in 2003 (12).

We were particularly pleased that the team recognised many of the key features that we believe contribute to the ethos of the school and they are as follows:

- Pupils' behaviour is good and they are courteous (16).
- Attendance levels are good and are above the attendance levels of similar schools in Wales (16).
- Teaching is good and there are good working relationships between teachers and learners (17).
- A wide range of resources are used well by teachers who have a good grasp of their subject knowledge and key skills are used effectively in lessons (18).
- Pupils with SEN and those with other learning difficulties make very good progress in relation to their ability (15).
- Results in tests, statutory assessments and examinations are good (13) and in 2008, examination results in KS 4 were above national averages in all indicators (13). In the sixth form, the percentage of students achieving an A-E grade in two or more Advanced level subjects is above the national average (13).
- Standards are good in all six key skills in each key stage (14).
- Pupils and students' bilingual skills are good (14).
- Learners are able to discuss issues well amongst themselves and with their teachers (14).
- The school council is an effective forum where pupils can raise their opinions about issues that affect them. Pupils feel confident that their views are listened to and acted upon and this gives them a sense of responsibility.
- The arrangements for assisting pupils to transfer from one key stage to another are good and outstandingly good from KS4 to the sixth form. (22).
- The outstanding range of extra-curricular activities which are provided by the school enrich learners' personal development (23).
- The ways in which the school plans and manages care arrangements and support services are outstandingly good (26).

However, the important shortcomings identified by the Inspectors will be taken seriously as they were in 2003 and action taken to substantially extend and improve the quality of monitoring at all levels of management. All the recommendations, some of which have already been addressed in the SIP, will be implemented through an Action Plan which will be drawn out in September.

We would like to thank the Inspection Team for their findings and recommendations and we will embrace these to further improve the services we provide.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

Name of school	Llanidloes High School
School type	Secondary
Age range of pupils	11-18
Address of school	Llangurig Road Llanidloes Powys
Postcode	SY18 6EX
Telephone number	01686 412289
Headteacher	Dr J G Hughes
Date of appointment	1 January 1984
Chair of governors	Mrs H Jenkins
Reporting inspector	Mr W Gwyn Thomas
Dates of inspection	11 – 13 May 2009

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	129	114	152	131	138	76	47	787

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	48	5	51.3

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	15.3:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	5:1
Average teaching group size	18.4
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	77.9%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole school
Term 1	94.8	94.4	95.1	92.1	86.1	78.8	75.6	90.2
Term 2	93.3	92.1	91.8	94.1	91.9	91.4	80.9	91.8
Term 3	93.7	92.8	92.3	92.2	91.8	93.7	80.2	91.9

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	5.1
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	14 Temporary / 0 Permanent

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results End of key stage 3:

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results 2008																
Total number of pupils in Y9: 131																
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	0	0	0	0	3.8	11.5	31.3	34.4	17.6	0	0	
		National	0.2	0	0	0.5	0.4	1.4	6.8	21.4	35.7	24.1	8.5	0.2	-	
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	0	11.1	0	55.6	33.3	0	0	0	
		National	0.4	0	0	0.2	0.1	0.4	6.3	20	37	26.2	8.8	0.5	-	
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	3.1	12.2	23.7	39.7	19.1	0.8	0	
		National	0.2	0	0	0.4	0.3	1.1	7.8	19.7	27.6	27.1	14.4	0.8	-	
Science	Teacher assessment	School	1.5	0	0	0	0	0	1.5	7.6	29	27.5	32.8	0	0	
		National	0.2	0	0	0.3	0.2	0.8	6.5	20.9	34.7	25.7	10	0.1	-	

- 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				
In the school	77.1		In Wales	56.7

LLANIDLOES HIGH SCHOOL

SSSP

Summary of Secondary School Performance (1)

LEA/School No. 666/4002

Pupils aged 15

Number of pupils aged 15 who were on roll in January 2008: 160

Percentage of pupils aged 15 who :

	entered at least one qualification	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	Core Subject Indicator (2)	Average wider points score per pupil
School 2007/08	99	96	71	57	57	429
LEA Area 2007/08	97	92	67	56	55	388
Wales 2007/08	98	87	58	46	44	356
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	20	418
School 05/06/07	..	..	..	..	58	416

Number of boys aged 15 who were on roll in January 2008: 92

Percentage of boys aged 15 who :

	entered at least one qualification	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	Core Subject Indicator (2)	Average wider points score per pupil
School 2007/08	97	95	71	55	55	409
LEA Area 2007/08	97	90	61	52	51	363
Wales 2007/08	98	84	53	42	41	334
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	20	412
School 05/06/07	..	..	..	..	58	406

Number of girls aged 15 who were on roll in January 2008: 68

Percentage of girls aged 15 who :

	entered at least one qualification	achieved the Level 1 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold	achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE pass in English or Welsh first language and mathematics	Core Subject Indicator (2)	Average wider points score per pupil
School 2007/08	100	99	72	60	60	457
LEA Area 2007/08	98	94	72	61	60	414
Wales 2007/08	99	90	63	50	48	379
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	20	426
School 05/06/07	..	..	..	..	58	427

- (1) For details on qualifications, point scores and contribution to thresholds, please see guidance at [SSSP guidance](#).
 (2) For information about which syllabuses are included in each subject area see Notes for Guidance. For the provisional SSSP this will be the traditional GCSE definition. In the final SSSP, this definition will include a wider range of qualifications.
 .. Data not available

LLANIDLOES HIGH SCHOOL

SSSP

Summary of Secondary School Performance (1)

LEA/School No. 666/4002

Pupils aged 15

	Percentage of pupils aged 15 who :		Percentage of boys aged 15 who :		Percentage of girls aged 15 who :	
	achieved one or more ELQ (2) only	Left full time education without a qualification (3)	achieved one or more ELQ (2) only	Left full time education without a qualification (3)	achieved one or more ELQ (2) only	Left full time education without a qualification (3)
School 2007/08	0	1.3	0	2.2	0	0
LEA Area 2007/08	1.5	0.2	2.5	0.4	0.4	0.1
Wales 2007/08	2.6	1.5	3.4	1.9	1.7	1.2
School 06/07/08	0	..	0	..	0	..
School 05/06/07	0	..	0	..	0	..

Pupils aged 17

	Number of pupils aged 17 who were on roll in January 2008: 61		Number of boys aged 17 who were on roll in January 2008: 32		Number of girls aged 17 who were on roll in January 2008: 29	
	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17	Percentage of 17 year old pupils entering a volume equivalent to 2 A Levels who achieved the Level 3 threshold	Average wider points score for pupils aged 17
School 2007/08	96	684	93	639	100	734
LEA Area 2007/08	97	698	95	659	98	729
Wales 2007/08	94	631	93	596	95	659
School 06/07/08	..	..	..	..	..	..
School 05/06/07	..	..	..	..	..	..

- (1) For details on qualifications, point scores and contribution to thresholds, please see guidance at [SSSP guidance](#).
 (2) Entry Level Qualification
 (3) As defined under the National Performance Indicator EDU/002.
 .. Data not available

SECONDARY SSSP EXAMINATION DATA, 2006 - 2008

Llanidloes High School

666

4002

<i>Free School Meals, 2006 - 2008</i>	2006	2007	2008
% of pupils entitled to Free School Meals	6.0	5.7	5.1
Free School Meal band	FSM<=10%	FSM<=10%	FSM<=10%

<i>Key Stage 4, 2006 - 2008</i>	2006	2007	2008
% achieving the Level 1 threshold	..	96.6	96.3
Benchmark Quartile	..	2	2
% achieving the Level 2 threshold	..	66.4	71.3
Benchmark Quartile	..	3	2
% achieving the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE at grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and Maths	57.5
Benchmark Quartile	3
% achieving the Level 2 threshold in the core subjects	57.5
Benchmark Quartile	2
Average wider points score	425.6	398.4	428.9
Benchmark Quartile	1	2	2

For 2004 onwards, the FSM percentage was based on pupils of compulsory school age only.

.. the data item is not available

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Inspectors spent a total of 31 inspector days in the school and were joined by the school's deputy headteacher as nominee. They held a meeting before the inspection.

During the inspection, inspectors visited:

- 45 lessons;
- registrations and assemblies; and
- some extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team met with:

- staff, parents and governors before the inspection;
- senior managers, middle managers, teachers, support assistants and administrative staff;
- groups of pupils representing each year group;
- representatives of the school council; and
- business and other school partners.

The team also considered:

- the school's self-evaluation report;
- 45 replies to the parents' questionnaire;
- documentation provided by the school before and during the inspection;
- samples of pupils' reports; and
- a range of pupils' work.

After the inspection, inspectors held meetings with senior managers and governors.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
William Gwyn Thomas	Rgl KQ1 and KQ5, context, summary recommendations, appendix.
Gwynoro Jones	Lay Inspector, contributing to all key questions.
Peredur Francis	KQ2
Huw Llewelyn	KQ3
David B Morgan	KQ4
Bethan Whittal	KQ6
Martyn S Williams	KQ7
Anthony Sparks	Support, contributing to all key questions.
Martyn L Williams	Support, contributing to all key questions.
Delyth Williams	Support, contributing to all key questions.
Andrew Herdman	Support, contributing to all key questions.
Sue Halliwell	Peer Assessor, contributing to all key questions.
Darren Davies	Nominee, contributing to all meetings.

Acknowledgement

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

Contractor

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