

**INSPECTION UNDER SECTION 10
INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS ACT 1996**

**Ysgol Morgan Llwyd
Cefn Road
Wrexham
LL13 9NG**

School number : 665 / 4032

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Registered Inspector : WO19 / 17166
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CURRICULUM AND KEY STAGES NOMENCLATURE

A new nomenclature to describe pupils' progress through the school was introduced in 1989. It is intended that this system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory education until the age of 18 should facilitate communication amongst schools, governing bodies, parents and LEAs and emphasise the importance of progression.

The term "Reception" (R) refers to the year group of pupils in a primary school (not a nursery class) whose fifth birthday will occur during the academic year. "Year 1" (Y1) is used for the year group of pupils whose sixth birthday will occur during the academic year and so on until Y13 - the year group whose 18th birthday will occur during the academic year:

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Age	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

Key stage (KS) 1 of the National Curriculum includes Y1 and Y2; KS2 includes Y3 to Y6; KS3 includes Y7 to Y9 and KS4 includes Y10 and Y11 (the last year of compulsory education).

GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

The following five point scale is used to represent the main opinions in the report as follows:

1. Very good: many good features, some particularly good.
2. Good: good features and no major shortcomings.
3. Satisfactory: good features that outweigh some shortcomings.
4. Unsatisfactory: some satisfactory work but shortcomings in important areas.
5. Poor: many shortcomings.

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1. CONTEXT

The school and its priorities

Ysgol Morgan Llwyd, Wrexham is a designated bilingual community comprehensive school maintained by the Local Education Authority [LEA] of the Unitary Authority [UA] of Wrexham. It has approximately 730 pupils. In September 2000 the school moved to a new campus and it is now situated on the former Cartrefle College site on Cefn Road on the outskirts of the town. Pupils come mainly from the Welsh primary schools in the town but also from a wider geographical catchment area that includes neighbouring villages and rural areas.

Half of the pupils come from the outer or inner areas of the town of Wrexham and the other half from neighbouring villages or rural areas. The school attests that it has no obviously advantaged or disadvantaged groups amongst its pupils. According to the school, a quarter of the pupils come from comparatively prosperous areas; half the pupils come from areas that are neither prosperous or economically disadvantaged, and a quarter come from areas that are economically disadvantaged. 10.5% of the pupils are registered as entitled to free school meals.

The school admits pupils from the full range of ability. 29 pupils (approximately 4.5% of Y7-Y11 pupils) have a statement of special educational needs [SEN]. In addition, 131 pupils and students (22% of Y7-Y13) are on steps one to four of the Code of Practice for SEN. The percentage of those with a statement is higher than the national percentage and the percentage of pupils on steps one to three is slightly higher than the national percentage. No pupil is disapplied from the National Curriculum [NC] and the curriculum has not been modified for any pupil.

90% of the pupils come from homes where English is the main language of the home and 10% from homes where Welsh is the main language. 99% of the pupils can speak Welsh to first language standard and all pupils follow lessons in Welsh as a first language. The school uses Welsh as the main medium of teaching.

The three year School Development Plan [SDP] notes 10 main priorities to:

- improve pupils' achievement;
- integrate the basic skills into learning;
- further develop the support for SEN pupils;
- develop a self-appraisal framework for the school;
- raise the status of the Welsh language;
- review the KS3 curriculum;
- establish the school on a new campus;
- review the behaviour policy;
- attract more learners to the school;
- establish an effective system of professional development.

c) Quantitative targets for the school 2001-2002

Key stage	Subject etc	% on level 5 or above in the school	County target (%)	Target for Wales (%)
KS3	Welsh	65	68	70-80%
	English	70	63	70-80%
	Mathematics	70	62	70-80%
	Science	70	62	70-80%
	Gap between boys and girls in the Core subject indicator	0	7	
KS4	5 GCSE subjects gaining grades A*-C	54-57	48	54
	5 GCSE subjects gaining grades A*-G	95	89	91
	Core subject indicator	42	36	50
	% leaving with no qualifications	0	3	
	% unauthorised absences	0	0.8	

The school was last inspected at the end of October and beginning of November 1996.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings of the report

Introduction

The school is a happy, Welsh, civilised, caring and congenial community where everyone is appreciated, and it has a number of strengths. It is an inclusive school. Post-16 examination results are good, GCSE results are better than the results for the UA and for Wales, and results in three of the four core subjects are good in KS3 statutory tests. With specific exceptions, pupils' behaviour is good. The support and guidance provided for them is good. The provision for pupils with SEN is very good.

Standards achieved by pupils in their subjects and in the key skills

Standards were satisfactory or better in 97% of the lessons observed during the inspection, good in 55% and very good in 8% of them. Only in 3% of lessons throughout the school were standards unsatisfactory; this is a very low percentage. The school reaches its internal target for standards of achievement in lessons, that is that standards are satisfactory or better in 95% of the lessons and good or better in over 50% of them.

The tables below show the standards in the subjects:

Subject	KS3 Standards	KS4 Standards	Y12 and Y13 Standards	Notes
Welsh (first language)	Good	Good	Very good	
English	Good	Good	Good	
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Good	Good	
Science	Good	Satisfactory	biology good, chemistry good, physics good	
Design and technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Information technology [IT]	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Computing in Y12, Satisfactory GNVQ intermediate Y12, Satisfactory
History	Good	Good	Good	
Geography	Good	Very good	Very good	
Modern Foreign Languages	Good	Good	Good	
Art	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Music	Good	Good	Very good	
Physical education	Good	Good	Good	In the GCSE course standards are good
Religious education	Good	Good	-	
Drama	Good	Good	Good	
PSE	Satisfactory	Good	-	

Other subjects studied at KS4 and Y12 and Y13

Subject	KS4	Y12 and Y13
Religious Studies	Good	-
Psychology	-	Good
Media	Good	Good
Business	Satisfactory	Good
GNVQ engineering	-	Good

The standards achieved by pupils with SEN are good in the large majority of subjects; otherwise they are satisfactory.

The school's formal system for promoting key skills across the curriculum is satisfactory for language and numeracy skills but unsatisfactory for ICT. In Welsh and English as subjects, standards in oral work, writing and listening are good. Apart from some subjects where standards remain good, pupils' standards in oral and written work are satisfactory across the subjects in Welsh. Standards in reading are good in both languages. Numeracy standards are satisfactory throughout the school. Standards in ICT across the curriculum are satisfactory at KS3 but unsatisfactory at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13. The standard of pupils' problem solving skills and

their ability to evaluate their own work is satisfactory. The standard of pupils' co-operation is good.

Examination results

At KS3 in 2001, in the NC statutory tests, results in English were very good, substantially higher than the LEA average and results for Wales and reached the national target for 2002 – that is, that between 70-80% of the pupils reach level 5 or above. Results in mathematics were also good and slightly higher than the results for the LEA and Wales. Results for Welsh were also good. On the other hand, results in science, namely 45% of pupils gaining level 5 or higher, were substantially lower than the results for the LEA and Wales. 43% of the pupils succeeded in reaching the Core Subject Indicator (CSI)¹. This is lower than the average for the LEA and Wales. To a significant extent this is attributable to the lack of comparative lack of success in science.

Over the past three years results in English and mathematics have shown an annual increase in the number gaining level 5 or higher in the NC statutory tests. Results in Welsh have been good over the same period. Although results were better in 2000, results in Welsh and science in 2001 were similar to those in 1999.

At KS4, in GCSE examinations in 2001, 53% of the pupils succeeded in gaining five or more A* - C grades. This percentage is higher than the results for the LEA and Wales, and is similar to the pattern seen over the last three years, although it is lower than the school results for 2000. The percentage gaining 5 or more A* - G grades in GCSE in 2001 was 89%, and again this is higher than the results for the LEA and Wales, and follows the pattern seen over the last three years.

In Welsh and English the percentage of pupils gaining A* - C grades in GCSE was higher than the results for the LEA and Wales; results in mathematics were also better than the LEA results but lower than the average for Wales. Results in science were lower than those for the LEA and Wales. These results are similar to the pattern seen over the last three years, apart from mathematics in 1999 where results were higher than the LEA and Wales results. In 2001, 35% of the pupils succeeded in gaining the CSI². This was 3% above the LEA average but slightly below the average for Wales. In 2000, 32% of the pupils succeeded in gaining the CSI, and 41% succeeded in doing so in 1999. The average points score for pupils (based on GCSE grades gained by the pupils) is consistently higher than the average score for the LEA and Wales over the last three years.

When considering the performance indicators, that is, the number of pupils gaining A* - C, and A* - G grades in five GCSE subjects, the CSI and average score of pupils, the performance of the boys was equal to or better than the performance of the girls at the end of KS4 in 2001.

In Advanced level examinations in 2001, 79% of the students registered for two or more Advanced level examinations or equivalent qualifications succeeded in gaining grades A – C, which is substantially higher than the average for the LEA and Wales. In 2000 the percentage was slightly lower than the average for the LEA and Wales, and in 1999 the percentage was slightly

¹ The core subject indicator at KS3 is the percentage of the Y9 cohort succeeding in reaching level five or better in the statutory assessments in a combination of either Welsh or English, mathematics and science.

2. The core subject indicator at KS4 is the percentage of the Y11 cohort succeeding to gain A* - C grades in the GCSE examinations in a combination of either Welsh or English, mathematics and science.

higher than the average for the LEA and equal to the average for Wales. The average points score of each student in 2001 was also substantially higher than the average for the LEA and Wales.

In the Advanced Supplementary examinations, examined for the first time in 2001, 64% of the candidates succeeded in gaining grades A – C.

In the vocational subjects, although numbers were small, all post-16 students succeeded in gaining a GNVQ qualification.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching in a significant number of departments is one of the school's strengths. Teaching in Y12 and Y13 is also a strength. In the lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of the teaching was satisfactory in 31%, good in 54%, very good in 12% and unsatisfactory in only 3% of lessons throughout the school. In Y12 and Y13 the quality of teaching was very good in 18% of the lessons observed and good in 52% of them. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in Y12 and Y13. The little unsatisfactory teaching seen at KS3 and KS4 was almost invariably in one subject where standards also are unsatisfactory at KS3.

This school's teaching is characterised by a positive relationship with pupils and good support for them. In addition, lessons are well planned. In the best lessons all pupils are motivated to take part and reach high standards. In the satisfactory lessons, the presentation is slower, the planning looser but there is a clear structure to the lesson. In the few unsatisfactory lessons, there is a lack of planning and insufficient challenge in the tasks for pupils.

Management, leadership and self-evaluation

Management and leadership in the school are good. A purposeful work ethos is successfully created. The school is led well by a head who has a clear vision, the ability to plan and to deal well with people. He gives good support to pupils and his staff. The head's commitment to the school is shared by the staff and governors, who are very supportive of the school. Recently the school's energies have been directed at its successful relocation on a new, large campus. Following illness there have been changes in the membership of the Management Team[MT] and consequently a number of them are new to their posts but are developing their managerial skills well. The School Development Plan [SDP] (1999-2002) is of satisfactory quality. The head has inherited it and it no longer reflects the current situation in the school. The draft versions of the new SDP, which is of good quality, show emphasis on improving teaching and raising standards by sharing good practice. Individual departments and teachers are monitored and there is a system for observing lessons but there is no precise monitoring of standards of subject work or standards in key skills.

With exceptions, departments are well led. Members co-operate well to provide good curricular experiences for pupils. The quality of departmental documentation is uneven. With exceptions, it is satisfactory. All documents in the Welsh department are good. The quality of planning of the work is generally good. The departmental development plans [DDP] are satisfactory. Human and financial resources are managed effectively and efficiently and the school gives good value for money.

The system of self-evaluation in the school has only just started and is satisfactory; substantial use is made of data analyses but only one cycle of departmental evaluations has so far been completed and in many instances that evaluation has been superficial and descriptive in nature.

Response to the last inspection

The school responded well to every key issue raised in the last inspection in 1996 but some issues remain key issues and are receiving attention. This report notes an improvement in the quality of teaching and in pupils' standards of achievement in a significant number of subjects.

The curriculum

The school offers a full and balanced curriculum, which conforms to the statutory requirements at KS3 and KS4. The wide options offered at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13 arise from the desire to provide purposeful education for pupils of differing abilities and interests, and this is part of the school's inclusion strategy. Pupils' curricular experiences are enhanced by wide extra-curricular provision and pupils are offered good opportunities to take part in competitive sports.

Statutory requirements

Y13 students do not have an opportunity to attend religious education lessons and this is contrary to statutory requirements. In addition, all pupils are not part of the daily collective worship, as services do not take place in a small number of registration classes. There are also some gaps in the information the school is expected to provide for parents and there is no home-school agreement.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory; their moral, social and cultural development is good. The school places value on the development of individual pupils, encouraging them to undertake social responsibilities, to extend their cultural horizons and to take an interest in sports. Pupils show respect for each other, their teachers and visitors.

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

3.1 Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Standards were satisfactory or better in 97% of the lessons observed during the inspection, good in 55% and very good in 8% of them. Only in 3% of lessons throughout the school were standards unsatisfactory; this is a very low percentage. The school reaches its internal target for standards of achievement in lessons, that is, that standards are satisfactory or better in 95% of lessons and good or better in over 50% of them.

In Welsh, standards are good at KS3 and KS4 and very good in Y12 and Y13. There is a significant improvement in standards as pupils move through the school. Standards in listening are very good throughout the school and standards in speaking generally good; pupils show confidence when undertaking oral tasks. Reading and writing skills are generally good. However, a significant number of pupils of medium and lower ability do not have a firm grasp of syntax in oral discussion and in writing and they use English words and phrases fairly often.

Standards in English are good throughout the school. Oral work is a particular strength, with pupils in most groups showing an ability to analyse literature and to work together purposefully. Reading skills develop well at KS3. Written work improves as pupils move through the key stages, with older pupils showing a good grasp of structure and register. There is a general weakness in spelling, although individual pupils show good progress. Work in Y12 and Y13 is good.

Standards in mathematics are satisfactory at KS3 and good at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13. Pupils have a good numerical knowledge and they can answer questions about decimals and fractions. In algebra they undertake appropriate work according to their ability. At KS4, pupils of higher

ability answer complex questions and undertake good, appropriate work when using and applying mathematics. Middle ability pupils, at this key stage particularly, do not complete their work regularly. In Y12 and Y13 pupils undertake appropriate work that leads to A2 examinations in various branches of mathematics and the work carried out is of a good standard. The department has made substantial progress since the last inspection.

Standards in science are good at KS3, satisfactory at KS4 and good in chemistry, physics and biology in Y12 and Y13. In 2001 results at KS3 were unsatisfactory and GCSE results were lower than those for the LEA and Wales. At KS3, standards are good in Y7 and Y8 but standards are satisfactory in Y9. At KS4, standards are better in Y11 than in Y10. Across both key stages the best standards are to be seen in pupils of higher ability. Pupils' practical skills across both key stages have developed well but apart from Y7 and Y8, investigative skills are not as well developed.

Standards in design and technology are satisfactory at KS3, satisfactory in all the design and technology courses at KS4, and satisfactory in Y12 and Y13. Although standards vary between good and satisfactory according to the key stage and the materials, design, graphical, making, finishing and evaluative skills are generally satisfactory. Across the units and years, pupils have good knowledge and understanding about CAD activities. In Y12 and Y13, the standard of course work is satisfactory; students carry out appropriate research and produce appropriate initial ideas but only a little work has been completed so far.

Standards in IT are satisfactory throughout the school. At KS3, there are good aspects to work in communicating and handling information but middle and lower ability pupils do not interpret the results of the investigations sufficiently. Pupils use a spreadsheet to create computer models but they cannot explain the effects of the changes made. At KS4, standards of course work are satisfactory and pupils' ability to control devices is good. Pupils' ability to evaluate their projects is satisfactory. In Y12, standards are satisfactory. Generally, although they understand some matters which are relevant to the subject, students do not respond to questions in sufficient detail to satisfy the demands of the AS examination.

Standards in history are good throughout the school. At KS3, there are particular strengths in historical enquiry; standards in knowledge and understanding and interpretation of history are more variable. Many pupils write clearly and thoughtfully. In KS4 and in Y12 and Y13, standards of knowledge and understanding are good, and work with historical sources is of a high standard. Much written work is well organised and knowledgeable, but some of it lacks sufficient depth and analysis.

In geography, standards are good at KS3 and very good at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13. KS3 pupils have a good knowledge of patterns and processes and they develop subject skills and vocabulary. At KS4, they have a sound understanding of interaction between people and the environment and of efforts to manage or prevent possible disasters. Y12 and Y13 students find information from a range of sources and communicate their work in different ways with accuracy, detail and increasing thoroughness.

In French, standards are good throughout the school. Standards in listening and reading work are good at KS3 and KS4. In addition, pupils communicate well orally and in writing, with the most able using a variety of verb tenses. Expression of opinion is short and the level of accuracy suffers in extended speaking and writing. In Y12 and Y13 pupils have an adequate knowledge of France. They speak and write expressing opinions and justifying standpoints although the best standards are impaired by errors in verbs and grammar. Students follow authentic passages for reading and listening well.

Standards in art are unsatisfactory at KS3 and satisfactory at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13. Although Y8 students make effective use of ICT to develop their own animations and although pupils

respond enthusiastically to the activities, their understanding of the visual language of line, tone, colour, shape and space is unsatisfactory. At KS4, standards in 2 dimensional work are satisfactory and standards in the occasional project are good. In Y12, standards are satisfactory and the students use a range of suitable materials and there are good examples of sketching and painting. In Y13, students' work is inspired by the work of other artists.

Standards in music are good at KS3 and KS4 and very good in Y12 and Y13. Standards of singing are satisfactory and standards of performance with instruments are good at KS3. Standards of performing are good at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13. Standards in composition are good throughout the school and in Y12 and Y13 there are examples of very good compositions. The standard of appraisal is good throughout the school.

Standards in physical education are good throughout the school. At KS3, standards are good across a range of different aspects of the subject, though there are weaknesses in hockey and cricket lessons. At KS4, there are strengths in the GCSE work especially, although there are shortcomings in striking games. In Y12 and Y13, the students discuss and analyse concepts well and relate them to their work.

Standards in statutory religious education at KS3 and KS4 and religious studies at KS4 are good. Across the range of ability, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Christian beliefs and practices and of the other main religions represented in Wales. At KS4, pupils offer genuine reasons for their personal responses to religious beliefs and practices.

Standards of achievement in PSE are satisfactory at KS3 and good at KS4. Across both key stages pupils foster self-confidence and develop learning skills. Pupils form supportive relationships and learn how to show respect for people and property.

At KS3 in 2001, in the statutory tests of the National Curriculum, results in English were very good, and substantially higher than the average for the LEA and Wales and reached the National target for 2002 – that is, that between 70-80% of pupils should reach level 5 or higher. Results in mathematics were also good and slightly higher than the results for the LEA and Wales. In addition, results for Welsh were good. On the other hand, results in science, namely 45% of pupils gaining level 5 or higher, were substantially lower than the results for the LEA and Wales. 43% of the pupils succeeded in reaching the CSI. This is lower than the average for the LEA and Wales. To a significant extent this is attributable to the comparative lack of success in science.

Over the past three years, results in English and mathematics have shown an annual increase in the number gaining level 5 or higher in the NC statutory tests. Results in Welsh have been good over the same period. Although results were better in 2000, results in Welsh and science in 2001, were similar to those in 1999.

Over the last three years, girls' performance has been better than boys' in Welsh and English. In these subjects in 2001, the gap between the boys' and girls' performance was approximately 10%, a gap which has gradually increased in Welsh but which has varied from year to year in English. In mathematics and science the difference between the boys and girls has been in the boys' favour, with over 20% difference between the boys and girls in 2001. In these subjects this gap has increased over the last three years.

In the CSI, the boys' performance has been consistently better than the girls' over the last three years, with 18 percentage points difference in the boys' favour in 2001. The main influence on the percentage of pupils reaching the CSI is the comparatively low number reaching level five in science.

At KS4, in GCSE results in 2001, 53% of the pupils succeeded in gaining five or more A* - C grades. This percentage is higher than the results for the LEA and Wales, and is similar to the pattern seen over the last three years, although it is lower than the school results for 2000. The percentage gaining 5 or more A* - G grades in GCSE in 2001 was 89%, and again this is higher than the results for the LEA and Wales, and follows the pattern seen over the last three years.

In Welsh and English the percentage of pupils gaining A* - C grades in GCSE was higher than the results for the LEA and Wales; results in mathematics were also better than the LEA results but lower than the average for Wales. Results in science were lower than those for the LEA and Wales. These results are similar to the pattern seen over the past three years, apart from mathematics in 1999, where results were higher than the LEA and Wales results. In 2001, 35% of the pupils succeeded in gaining the CSI. This was 3% above the LEA average but slightly below the average for Wales. In 2000, 32% of the pupils succeeded in gaining the CSI, and 41% succeeded in doing so in 1999. The average points score for pupils (based on GCSE grades gained by the pupils) is consistently higher than the average score for the LEA and Wales over the last three years.

When considering the performance indicators, namely the number of pupils gaining A* - C, and A* - G grades in five GCSE subjects, the CSI and average score of pupils, the performance of boys was equal to or better than the performance of girls at the end of KS4 in 2001.

In the core subjects in 2001, the results of the boys and girls in English were quite similar. In Welsh the girls' performance was slightly better than the boys'. Over the last three years the gap in performance has decreased gradually in Welsh but in English the gap in boys' and girls' performance varies from year to year. In mathematics and science the performance of the boys was substantially better than the girls with 19 percentage points difference between them in mathematics and 26 percentage points difference in science. Apart from science in 1999, this is the first time over the last three years that the performance of the boys has been better than that of the girls.

In Advanced level examinations in 2001, 79% of the students registered for two or more Advanced level examinations or equivalent qualifications succeeded in gaining grades A - C, which is substantially higher than the average for the LEA and Wales. In 2000, the percentage was slightly lower than the average for the LEA and Wales, and in 1999 the percentage was slightly higher than the average for the LEA and equal to the Welsh average. The average points score of each student in 2001 was also substantially higher than the average for the LEA and Wales.

In the Advanced Supplementary examinations, examined for the first time in 2001 64% of the candidates succeeded in gaining grades A - C.

In the vocational subjects, although numbers were small, all post-16 students succeeded in gaining a GNVQ qualification.

3.2 Standards in key skills

The following judgement on standards in language skills in Welsh is based on evidence of Welsh as a subject and also as a medium of teaching across the subjects. The judgement on language

skills in English is based on evidence of English mainly as a subject, as it is rare for the majority of pupils to use English as a medium across the curriculum.

In Welsh and English as subjects, standards in oral work, reading, writing and listening are good; apart from some subjects where standards remain good, the standards of oral and writing skills in Welsh across subjects are satisfactory.

At KS3 and KS4, the most able speak extensively using clear and polished language to express and justify viewpoints and the standard of these pupils' oral Welsh is good. The spoken language of the less able students is not so good. They are willing to speak and to ask and answer questions but their language is littered with errors in mutation and the use of English instead of Welsh constructions. In addition, they use English idioms in their Welsh and they lack abstract vocabulary in Welsh. On the other hand, the spoken language of Y12 and Y13 students is often refined and mature in its ideas.

Pupils are confident in English, which many use for socialising. Standards are good throughout the school. Pupils speak extendedly.

Listening skills are good throughout the school. Pupils listen carefully and with understanding which is shown in their oral or written contributions.

Standards in reading are good in both languages. At KS3 and KS4, although the most able read aloud in a polished and meaningful manner, the standard of reading aloud of pupils of middle and lower ability is satisfactory, especially in group situations where voices are quiet and the presentation is hesitant. The standard of reading for information is good throughout the school. The standard of pupils' ability to transfer knowledge from English to Welsh is good. Reading for pleasure is good throughout the school in both languages.

Standards in writing in Welsh are satisfactory at KS3 and KS4 across the curriculum and are good in English as a subject. Pupils write extensively but spelling errors impair written standards in both languages and there are some shortcomings with regard to expression, syntax, idioms and vocabulary in Welsh, especially amongst pupils of middle and lower ability. Standards in writing in Y12 and Y13 are good; there are examples of very good writing in both languages.

Standards in numeracy across the curriculum are satisfactory at KS3, KS4 and in Y12 and Y13. The numeracy co-ordinator has developed appropriate work, which is included in the mathematics course, to support numeracy in other departments. Standards in mental arithmetic are uneven. Able pupils achieve good standards. Middle ability and less able pupils achieve satisfactory standards. Pupils make good, appropriate use of calculators in mathematics as a subject, though, in science, middle ability and less able pupils rely too heavily on calculators for computation. In science, pupils measure accurately and use basic graphical techniques to present data. In design and technology, pupils can measure appropriately and can draw to scale to an acceptable degree of accuracy. In geography also, pupils use scale correctly and appropriately. In mathematics, pupils display data and choose appropriate graphs. This skill is not always so evident across the curriculum

At KS3, ICT standards across the curriculum are satisfactory. In a large number of subjects, pupils use ICT to combine picture and text in order to present information. There are good examples in Welsh. However, there is insufficient progression in the work and, as a result, the pupils' ability to combine a range of different media from a variety of sources is not sufficiently developed. In mathematics, pupils' ICT ability to save, change and retrieve information from a database and to use a spreadsheet for modelling is satisfactory. The opportunities for pupils to use

sensors for recording data in science are rare. The pupils' ability to use design software in art and design and technology is satisfactory and the standard of control work in design and technology is good.

At KS4, standards in ICT across the curriculum are unsatisfactory. Although there are examples of combining a picture and text to create posters and examples for specific parts of course work, pupils' ability to combine a wide range of media from a variety of sources is unsatisfactory.

Pupils' ability to find information on the Internet and incorporate it in their work develops satisfactorily in about half the subjects but examples of using increasingly complex interrogation methods for finding information are very rare. In design and technology, the work of controlling devices and designing circuits is good.

In Y12 and Y13, where standards are also unsatisfactory, ICT work is mainly limited to using ICT for improving project work presentation. Pupils' ability to select the appropriate software to complete tasks and to use the technology to improve understanding of a subject is not adequately developed.

The standard of pupils' ability in problem solving and in evaluating their own work is satisfactory. Standards of pupil co-operation are good.

4. ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

4.1 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

This school is a well-organised, happy and caring community. Emphasis is placed on respect for individuals and the environment. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory and their moral, social and cultural development is good.

Pupils' spiritual development is promoted by means of religious education provision and collective worship. A number of NC subjects, such as Welsh, English and music also contribute to the spiritual dimension. The act of collective worship, which happens by year group or as a whole school, is Christian in nature and themes are related effectively to the life and work of the school and community. The quality of collective worship observed was satisfactory. Worship includes appropriate presentations by pupils and members of staff, together with prayers and singing. Poor acoustics in the sports hall do not help to create an ideal ethos of worship. When pupils do not attend collective worship by year or as a whole school, the class tutor is expected to be responsible for collective worship. The best collective worship in class is characterised by the positive contribution of teachers and meaningful contributions of pupils. In a very few classes, collective worship does not take place and this is contrary to the statutory requirements.

The school develops pupils' moral attitudes through emphasis on fostering self-confidence, respect and consideration for others and on responsible behaviour. Every individual is appreciated in this happy community. Pupils have an opportunity of discussing moral issues consistently in subjects such as religious education, English, Welsh, PSE, media and drama. They learn well about issues related to prejudice, honesty, choice and responsibility and they deal with these in a sensitive way. Through their support for a large number of charities and fund raising activities, pupils show awareness and care for children and people less fortunate than themselves. The school undertakes a collection for charity every half term and a sum of money is earmarked for a specific local or national charity.

The social awareness of pupils is fostered by means of a large number of activities such as extra-curricular clubs and activities, as well as day to day opportunities in school. A strong community

feeling is established and pupils are proud of their new school. The relationship between pupils and teachers is very good. Pupils co-operate in pairs and groups naturally and happily. They mix very well socially and co-operate confidently across the age range. House leaders, year representatives and the School Council all offer appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their initiative. All in all, however, the opportunities for pupils to develop initiative are rare. A substantial number of pupils take part in extra-curricular activities in the areas of sports, music and drama. They know how to form supportive relationships which are full of respect with people of the opposite sex.

The school ethos promotes pupils' awareness of Wales and its heritage. The school makes an effort to ensure daily use of the Welsh language through its courses, social and cultural opportunities and the activities organised within the school and the community. Pupils take part in the school eisteddfod, Urdd eisteddfod, concerts and various activities. The pupils' European and international awareness is developed by means of specific aspects in the curriculum and numerous opportunities to visit different countries outside Wales. There is a valuable link between the school and a school in Oconomowoc in the United States. Multi-cultural awareness is promoted in some subjects. In other subjects, opportunities to appreciate and study cultures different to that of the school are lost. The numerous displays around the school of visits, activities and pupils' success record pupils' and teachers' commitment to the life and values of the school.

4.2 Behaviour and attitudes

The general standard of pupils' behaviour and attitude is good.

Pupils behave well during lessons. Generally they have positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils with SEN make a good effort to concentrate on their tasks.

The school is a caring community and pupils live and play together happily within it. They show respect for staff and visitors. Pupils know the school expects a high standard of behaviour. Generally, pupils conform to the school's code of behaviour.

Teachers praise and reward good behaviour. They also respond immediately to any case of misbehaviour. The school's pastoral strategies ensure that pupils who misbehave have opportunities to adapt their behaviour to conform to the school's practices and values.

The school has an appropriate anti-bullying policy. Effective use is made of drama to raise pupils' awareness of bullying. During the inspection period no cases of bullying, sexism, racism or discrimination were seen. Pupils are confident that any complaint would be given serious consideration.

Effective use is made of different schemes such as Compact +, an alternative curriculum, 'Go for it' and link courses as part of the school's social inclusion programme. The school is about to start a pilot scheme, the "Student Assistance Programme", with groups of pupils sharing the same kinds of problems.

The school makes every possible effort to avoid expelling pupils. During the last twelve months there were no permanent exclusions. During the same period 14 were temporarily excluded. In each case the relevant guidelines were followed consistently and appropriately.

4.3 Attendance

Pupils' attendance is satisfactory.

Over the three terms prior to the inspection the attendance rates of pupils of compulsory school age were 89.1%. The school has followed the guidelines in the Welsh Assembly's Circular 3/99 appropriately and has interpreted study periods away from the site as authorised absence. This was taken into consideration when forming the opinion that the attendance of pupils of compulsory school age was satisfactory.

The percentage of unauthorised absences was 0.4% which is low. As the school is not prepared to tolerate any truancy, it has set a target of 0% for unauthorised absences.

In some terms the attendance of some years falls up to two percentage points below 90%. In an effort to improve the situation, the school has established a system of contacting the home on the first day of absence. As a result pupils and parents are more aware of the importance of consistent attendance but it is too early yet to evaluate the success of this system.

At the end of each term good attendance is celebrated by presenting gold, silver or bronze certificates to individual pupils.

The educational social worker works effectively with the school to improve attendance. She meets the heads of year at least once a week. Individual cases are discussed and procedures adapted as needed giving specific attention to a small cohort of pupils whose pattern of absence is a cause for concern.

The school exercises some flexibility in recording the attendance of Y12 and Y13 students when they have free lessons. Students are regularly reminded that they are required to record their movements at the school reception area.

Punctuality at the start of the day is satisfactory. Pupils who arrive late register at the school reception. During the day lessons start and finish on time. When a pupil arrives at a lesson late, teachers insist on an explanation.

5. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

5.1 Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching in a significant number of departments is one of the school's strengths. Teaching in Y12 and Y13 is also a strength. In the lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of the teaching was satisfactory in 31%, good in 54%, very good in 12% and unsatisfactory in only 3% of lessons throughout the school. In Y12 and Y13 the quality of teaching was very good in 18% of the lessons observed and good in 52% of them. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in Y12 and Y13. The little unsatisfactory teaching seen at KS3 and KS4 was almost invariably in one subject where standards are also unsatisfactory at KS3.

Relationships of teachers with pupils are very good, with mutual respect and a friendly, purposeful atmosphere in the great majority of lessons.

Where teaching is good, teachers have prepared and structured their lessons so that pupils are on task and learning at a fast pace. There is continuity between lessons, with a sense of purpose and progression. The aims of the lesson are made clear to the pupils at the beginning of the session, and pupils are asked to recall their learning targets in the summing up. Expectations of all pupils are high, yet the work is structured so that pupils of all abilities are involved and able to make progress. Teachers take account of the linguistic abilities of pupils by presenting appropriate vocabulary and structures. They use a wide variety of teaching techniques that are appropriate to the work being undertaken. In addition, teachers make good use of learning support assistants [LSA] to help pupils with SEN.

Where teaching is very good, for example in some lessons in Welsh, English and geography and occasional lessons in other subjects, pupils are stimulated to participate with enthusiasm and commitment in time-constrained tasks that keep them working to the full. Pupils at all levels of ability are challenged to achieve beyond their own expectations. Teachers ensure that they are working towards creating independent learners.

Where teaching is satisfactory, lesson structure and timing are loose, so that pupils cover the required ground without fully internalising the content of the lesson, and achieve somewhat less than is possible in the time available. These lessons allow pupils to be passive learners. Differentiation is satisfactory but is insufficiently developed to involve every pupil fully.

The unsatisfactory lessons were mainly at KS3. The planning was inadequate, with lessons poorly structured leading to a loss of purpose and progression. Little was learnt.

5.2 Assessment, recording and reporting

Assessment, recording and reporting are good.

The quality and consistency of assessment is good throughout the school. The arrangements for gathering, recording and interpreting pupils' assessments are very good; the frequency and usefulness of reports for parents are good, and the use made of assessment to promote higher standards is satisfactory.

The school has a policy document that outlines the general principles of assessment. Attention is given in it to the consistency of assessment methods in departments, gathering, recording and presenting assessments and the use of analysing assessment data. The procedures for assessing in departments vary from good to unsatisfactory. Generally they are satisfactory. In the great majority of departments, the assessment is an accurate reflection of pupils' standards. The majority of departments undertake a detailed analysis of assessment data, but, on the whole, the use made by departments of these analyses to promote higher standards is satisfactory. Self-assessment by pupils has been developed in a number of departments but the quality varies from good to unsatisfactory. Generally it is satisfactory. In some departments portfolios have been developed which include standardised examples of pupils' work; this is good practice and an effective tool for moderating assessment within the department.

Information on pupils' progress is gathered each term and detailed records are kept of this information. The procedures for gathering, recording, analysing and setting individual targets for pupils in the core subjects are very good. This information is shared with subject heads, heads of

year and class tutors and it is an effective tool for monitoring pupils' progress and identifying pupils who underachieve. The use made of this information by the departments to promote higher standards is inconsistent. Class tutors make good use of the information when discussing pupils' progress during the mentoring periods.

Day to day marking ranges from good to satisfactory. Generally it is satisfactory. Where the marking is good, pupils' work is marked thoroughly and perceptive and constructive comments are given that note how a pupil can improve. However, at times, marking is superficial and there are no comments to help pupils to improve. Within some departments there are inconsistencies and a lack of detail in the marking and assessment from day to day; there are examples of errors in language, misspelling and misspelling specialised terms without correction.

The school reports to parents throughout the school each term. Full reports are given to parents once a year, conforming to the statutory requirements. In addition an interim report is provided for each pupil once a year and oral reports are given to parents in a meeting held once a year, in the term when no written reports are provided. This system is good. The full report includes a profile of pupil attainment in study skills and in individual subjects, subject comments together with the general comments of the class tutor. The interim reports include a profile of pupil attainment in study skills and in the subject. The format of the full reports is good but the standard of comments is inconsistent. Generally their quality is satisfactory. Detailed comments are given on individual pupils. At their best the comments are perceptive and evaluative. Where the comments are not as good, they tend to emphasise pupils' attitudes and attainment rather than detail strengths and weaknesses and the way pupils can improve. Often the qualitative targets set are too general to be of any benefit to the pupil. Some departments use a comment bank to create a full report. Often, these comments do not differentiate sufficiently between pupils.

At the end of Y11 a Record of Achievement is presented to each pupil. It includes personal statements, comments of the class tutor, comments from work experience, personal skills, certificates and examination results. They are valuable records of pupils' development and attainment.

5.3 Curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good throughout the school.

The curriculum at both KS3 and KS4 is broad and balanced and conforms to statutory requirements. In Y12 and Y13, the curriculum is extensive and is enhanced by joint provision with another secondary school. Students in Y13, however, are not given an opportunity to participate in religious education lessons and this is contrary to statutory requirements.

At KS3, pupils study all the NC subjects and this basic provision is enhanced by drama and personal and social education [PSE] lessons, the latter allowing the school to meet its statutory obligation to provide health, sex and careers education. Pupils study Welsh as a core subject and one foreign language, namely French. Generally, subject time allocation over the key stage as a whole is acceptable, though the time allocated for design and technology is the minimum acceptable.

Heads of faculties have the opportunity to set or band pupils, if they wish, and the pupils with SEN are taught in small groups that help meet their needs. These arrangements are appropriate, as are class sizes generally.

At KS4, all pupils study Welsh, English, mathematics, science (either double or single), physical education, religious education and PSE. Generally, these arrangements are satisfactory and sufficient time is offered for the teaching of the core subjects. Nevertheless, those pupils following the GCSE single science course cover the subject in the same time as those following the double science option and hence opportunities to enrich their education are lost.

In addition to the compulsory subjects, there are four option columns arranged in such a manner that pupils must follow one of the design and technology courses offered, and a humanities subject. The two remaining options offer a wide range of subjects, though the school only offers one foreign language. These arrangements ensure that each pupil follows a reasonably balanced personal curriculum.

In Y12 and Y13, there is a wide range of courses on offer. These include both traditional academic AS and Advanced Level options and vocational GNVQ courses to suit pupils' varying needs, abilities and interests. Students are invited to choose from an open menu of subjects. The school then creates a clash matrix to determine the best way to present these subjects as options and hence minimise clashes in the timetable. This procedure has been mostly successful but some timetable clashes still exist, especially when students wish to study five subjects.

Curricular provision in Y13 is currently enhanced by a course in psychology (which is the only subject currently studied at the school through the medium of English) and in Y12 and Y13 by good curricular links with a neighbouring Welsh medium secondary school. Currently, students from Ysgol Morgan Llwyd study politics via video-conferencing from Ysgol Maes Garmon, Mold and that school's students study drama and media at Ysgol Morgan Llwyd. These arrangements are appropriate from both a curricular and a financial point of view.

Subject take-up is variable at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13, but even if numbers are small and the course is therefore not cost-effective, especially in Y12 and Y13, the school policy is to allow pupils or students to follow their chosen subject. This is done in order to ensure that education through the medium of Welsh is available locally in those subjects. This is consistent with the school's basic *raison d'être* as a designated Welsh-medium school. On occasion, teachers give up some of their non-contact time in order to ensure adequate teaching of their subjects.

Curricular planning within subjects is uneven. In the great majority of subjects, curricular planning is good. It is unsatisfactory in art at KS3 and satisfactory in IT, design and technology and PSE at KS4.

The contribution made to standards by homework is uneven and is inconsistent across the school and faculties. In about a third of the subjects, the homework set for GCSE classes extends the pupils and builds on work done in class. In IT, homework is set when appropriate, but in other subjects the amount set is inadequate or variable.

The quality of planning for numeracy and the four language skills is satisfactory throughout the school. The quality of planning for ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory at KS3, but unsatisfactory at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13. This is reflected in the standards for ICT at KS4 and Y12 and Y13.

The arrangements for the teaching of PSE at KS3 and KS4 are appropriate. PSE is a timetabled subject that is allocated one lesson a week. The PSE curriculum offered at KS3 is appropriately planned but the units covering careers education at KS4 are insufficiently detailed. The school's PSE provision follows the recommendations made by the National Assembly for Wales.

The school provides a good number of extra-curricular activities, which contribute to subject standards. In physical education, there are good opportunities for both boys and girls, especially at KS3 and KS4, to participate in team sports. There is a lunchtime mathematics games club. Field visits are arranged in geography, as are visits abroad and visits to 'French days' at a nearby university arranged by the European Studies faculty. Theatre trips are arranged to enhance provision in Welsh, English and French. In music, participation in the school choir, Y12 and Y13 party, instrumental groups, rock operas and in the Urdd eisteddfod, offers curricular enhancement.

The school curricular provision is socially inclusive because equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum exists for all pupils. No pupils are disapplied from the NC and no modification has been made to any pupil's NC. The curriculum offered by the school is suitable for all pupils and has the active support of the governing body and its curriculum sub-committee.

The school has responded to comments on the curriculum made in the last inspection report. Sufficient time has now been allocated to religious education and physical education at KS3. The PSE provision has been improved but ICT provision across the curriculum remains unsatisfactory, as does statutory religious education in Y13. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties at KS3 and KS4 have been improved by the appointment of LSAs to help their learning in mainstream classes, and appropriate timetabling has considerably reduced the number of clashes in students' timetables in Y12 and Y13.

5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

The arrangements for pupils' support, guidance and welfare are good.

The quality of the relationship between pupils themselves and between pupils and teachers is very good. Teachers' knowledge of the pupils as individuals and their care for them is also good. At lunchtime and after school, teachers are prepared to give time to advise pupils and the pupils and their parents appreciate this.

Class tutors, heads of year and the MT play an obvious role in the pastoral system that cares for pupils' personal development. The care for pupils' academic progress is good; mentoring periods are arranged with the class tutor and, as required, interviews are held with the school's pastoral heads in order to monitor progress and identify underachievement.

The school's PSE programme is appropriately structured and includes statutory health education and sex education. The provision is of good quality. In addition to input from subjects across the curriculum, specific lessons are arranged on the timetable and the quality of teaching in these is satisfactory at KS3 and good at KS4. Pupils who study drama in Y10 create a special performance for Y7 and Y8 pupils on the theme of bullying which leads to discussion and advice. This is an effective way of dealing with the subject and is appreciated by the younger pupils.

When transferring from KS3 to KS4, pupils are given good advice by means of a valuable handbook and an evening for parents to discuss options for Y10. There is no whole school strategy noting subject contributions to careers, nor is there a detailed scheme of work. However, appropriate advice is given to Y11 pupils for post-16 education, which is reinforced by effective input from a Careers Wales officer. Y12 and Y13 pupils are given good advice when preparing for higher education. Periods of work experience are organised for Y11 pupils. Work experience in Y12 is optional and only about a third of students take advantage of this opportunity.

The school takes appropriate steps to ensure pupil welfare, health and safety during lessons, during break and lunch times, external trips and work experience.

The arrangements for child protection are operative and all members of staff are aware of these arrangements.

5.5 Provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)

The provision for pupils with SEN is very good and the school's response to the requirements of the Code of Practice is good. Pupils with SEN are integrated naturally into the school community.

Many appropriate strategies are used to meet the needs of pupils with SEN. Pupils of lower ability are put in small groups and they are taught by subject teachers or teachers experienced in special needs. There is some flexibility in the groups and appropriate opportunities are offered for pupils to move to a mainstream class. Assistants in the mainstream classes effectively support a number of pupils.

In the small groups arranged across the subjects, pupils with SEN make good progress. A good range of learning techniques is used and pupils have a variety of experiences. There are good examples of differentiating the teaching appropriately according to ability, and the learning assistants give effective support. AT KS4, these pupils have access to GCSE and CoEA courses. Since the last inspection, appropriate opportunities have been developed for pupils with SEN to integrate into mainstream classes and subject teachers teach them.

Eighteen KS3 pupils are taken out of registration to have additional support in reading, by reading with Y10 pupils. This is very well planned and KS3 pupils enjoy the opportunity, are enthusiastic in their efforts and develop good reading skills. Y10 pupils have had appropriate training to undertake this work and they do so with enthusiasm and thoroughness.

In a number of mixed ability classes and in the small groups class assistants offer good support for pupils with SEN. The work is well targeted to ensure effective support and there are good examples of close co-operation with subject teachers. The assistants keep a record of the effectiveness of the support and this information is shared with the co-ordinator. This is good practice.

Seven pupils with specific learning difficulties have additional support from a county specialist teacher. The co-ordinator works closely with the teacher and careful consideration is given to the educational needs of the individual in order to ensure balance between support in the class and taking a pupil out of class. Pupils appreciate the support given and make good progress.

Subject departments are responsible for providing appropriate work for pupils with SEN within their curricular area. There are very good links between subject teachers and SEN teachers. Every half term useful meetings are held to discuss and share relevant information about the needs of individuals and methods of differentiation in the class. In addition, the co-ordinator distributes relevant information which includes an individual education plan [IEP] to each subject teacher.

Twenty nine pupils have a statement of SEN. The statements are reviewed effectively and consultation takes place with parents, external agencies and the LEA as needed. 131 pupils are

noted on the SEN register. The arrangements for identifying pupils in need of support are good, and the SEN register is reviewed effectively. Each pupil in need of additional support has an appropriate IEP. The schemes relate well to the needs of the individual and the statement, where that is useful. Appropriate targets are set but strategies for promoting a response to the targets are not recorded.

The co-ordinator offers very good guidance and is supported effectively in the work by a specialist teacher and assistants. There are very good links with the primary schools. The Senior Management Team and the designated governor are supportive of the work and ensure appropriate opportunities for pupils with SEN.

Since the last inspection, the school has responded positively and has ensured appropriate support for pupils with SEN in mainstream lessons. There is flexibility in the composition of the small groups and SEN expertise has developed in the subjects.

5.6 Partnership with parents and community, schools and other institutions

All partnerships with parents and the community, schools and other institutions are good.

Parents of the school are satisfied with the level of information that is available to them. The handbook for parents is well presented, attractive and informative on the aspects of school life that it covers, but lacks statutory information about a home-school agreement. There are references to statutory and other policies as being available. The report of the governing body to parents is also written in accessible language, but it does not contain statutory information on the dates of terms and times of sessions, the steps taken to revise policies, pupil destinations or steps taken to reach the aims for physical education. The personal organiser, which is issued to each pupil, is a valuable daily link between home and school, and many parents show their interest in and support for their children's education and development by signing it on a weekly basis, but teachers do not always indicate targets and follow-up remarks.

Parents receive 'The Ysgol Morgan Llwyd Messenger' once a term, giving details of events, dates and news. This is well produced and a useful source of information. The school produces a comprehensive, attractive 'Options' booklet for Y9 pupils and their parents, which they find informative and useful. They also appreciate the special parents' evening to discuss choices. The 'Tertiary Unit' booklet is useful and comprehensive, setting clearly the standards expected by the school, and the nature of work demanded at this level. Time is allocated for parents and pupils to discuss choices with relevant members of staff.

There is a Parent/Teacher Association with a well-motivated committee that meets once a month to arrange activities such as the Christmas Fair and cultural and social events, and to raise money. Parents support the school by providing transport to and from matches, by helping backstage at plays and concerts, by welcoming into their homes pupils from the USA on exchange visits, and also by raising money for the school.

Links with local primary schools are good. Teachers from the feeder primary schools come to Ysgol Morgan Llwyd for regular meetings to discuss special needs strategies and to exchange information. Regular visits to the primary schools by the headteacher, the management team member in charge of primary/secondary liaison and the special needs co-ordinator facilitate the transition of pupils into the secondary school. There are a number of very useful bridging activities, including a residential course in Glanllyn and visits to Ysgol Morgan Llwyd in Y6. Exercise books issued by the secondary school are used in the summer term of Y6, and sent with the pupils to the secondary school, thus aiding continuity of progression in the core subjects.

The school has links with other Welsh medium secondary schools, and has organised joint educational visits abroad. Students are offered the choice of studying a minority subject at another school in Y12 and Y13 and students from that school attend lessons in two subjects at Ysgol Morgan Llwyd. There have been exchange visits with a school in the USA, and Y7 and Y8 have the opportunity to go to France to extend their cultural horizons. Y12 and Y13 students studying Welsh spend time at Glanllyn on a residential course and act as mentors for Y6 and Y7 pupils. The physical education department organises an annual skiing trip and also a week-long open-air activities session is held at the centre at Nant Bwlch yr Haearn.

Good links with the UA have led to the successful relocation of the school on the Cartrefle site in new buildings.

The school has extensive links with the local community; it holds concerts, services, exhibitions, fairs, eisteddfodau, and evening classes for local residents are held at the school. The school is part of the Caia Park community, and works with them and with a nearby Residents' and Tenants' Association. There are close links with the nearby old people's home, where pupils entertain the residents musically.

In Y12 and Y13, time is allocated for students to discuss their applications for higher education with the deputy in charge of the tertiary unit, and representatives of universities are invited to the school on a regular basis to talk to students. Students appreciate the help they receive. A further link with higher education is provided through the contract the school has for initial teacher training; this is well organised, and care is taken that the school benefits from this link, and is not overburdened by accepting too many students at once.

5.7 Partnership with industry

The school's partnership with industry is unsatisfactory.

The school has no policy regarding partnership with industry and there is no whole-school strategy to foster pupils' awareness of the value of links with the world of work across the subjects.

Recently the school has established a link with Education Learning Wales [ELWa]. Staff placements in industry have been infrequent. However, one member of staff took advantage of financial support to organise a period of three days' placement. A number of members of staff have previous experience of working in industry and some of them have maintained the link.

A week's work experience is provided for all Y11 pupils in September. Due attention is given to health and safety requirements and a team of teachers visits the pupils during their period in the workplace. Last year approximately 30% of Y12 pupils also took advantage of the opportunity to follow a formal period of work experience.

Support from ELWa has contributed to appropriate provision for individual pupils by enabling them to follow work experience essential for their course work in practical subjects such as design and technology (Advanced Level), engineering (GNVQ), food technology and business studies (GCSE). However, only some subjects, such as media and drama, use industrial links deliberately for improving provision and for promoting subject standards. This is unsatisfactory.

Experienced staff provide careers guidance and education. The school works closely with the Careers Company and pupils are happy with the arrangements.

Eighteen Y12 and Y13 pupils spent a period of time in a careers conference for those interested in the health service. The school has held a careers conference where all the companies were eager to employ staff with bilingual skills. This is good practice.

The COMPACT scheme is not presently implemented. During the last two years a Business and Enterprise group did start but in both cases the enterprise was short-lived. As a result, pupils were unable to take Business and Enterprise examinations as in the past. At present no one runs a school bank.

The school had some success with the Engineering Education Scheme Wales [EESW] in the past. This year, however, the design and technology department is not part of the scheme.

The geography department's environmental project has been supported by the Environment Agency in Wales.

6. MANAGEMENT

6.1 Quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement

The quality of self-evaluation and planning for improvement is satisfactory.

Maintaining the school's procedure for self-evaluation at departmental and whole school level annually is one of the main priorities of the draft SDP for 2002-2005.

The present head inherited a SDP of satisfactory quality, which ends this year. The SDP was reviewed annually and reports were given to parents on developments in the main priorities. Reports were also given on implementing the post-inspection implementation plan following the last inspection. The present SDP includes priorities for the three years, expected outcomes, who is responsible, time for completion and an outline of the funding needed. Ten main priorities are recognised together with six other priorities. However, the number of priorities together with the implementation timetable is ambitious and a number by now are irrelevant for the school.

The head has drawn up a comprehensive whole school evaluation. This was used to form the draft SDP for 2002-2005. The school is in the process of consulting on this draft. Five main priorities for implementation are noted in it during the life of the SDP. The quality of the draft SDP for 2002-2005 is good.

The majority of departments have a DDP that comes to an end this year. The quality of the DDP is generally satisfactory, but the plans do not give sufficient detail on strategies for implementation nor do they concentrate on raising standards.

The self-evaluation system is in its early stages. An evaluation of the present situation in each department has been made but it does not include an evaluation of the success of the current DDP. As a result, some aspects noted as areas for development in the DDP remain in some departments' evaluations. The quality of the evaluation is inconsistent across the departments. In the best evaluations, such as Welsh, areas for development that concentrate on raising standards are identified. In other departments they are merely descriptive and do not identify priorities for raising standards.

The school makes detailed analyses of internal assessment data, teacher assessment results, KS2 and KS3 statutory tests and GCSE and A level external examinations together with data from commercial tests. These analyses are shared with heads of department and faculties, heads of year

and class tutors and they are a basis for discussion between the heads of department or faculty and the link members of the MT when evaluating their performance. However, departments do not make full use of these analyses in order to raise expectations and standards and in order to forward plan for improvement.

The school uses the analyses to set individual targets for pupils and the targets are reviewed annually. Qualitative targets are set for pupils by class tutors during the mentoring periods, this arrangement is good. Qualitative targets are noted on pupils' reports as part of the subject teachers' comments. On the whole these targets are satisfactory; too often the targets are too general to be of full benefit to the pupil.

A formal procedure exists to monitor quality of teaching across the school. The system is valuable with regard to sharing good practice. This procedure is implemented by the MT and within departments, and each member of staff is part of the process of observing lessons. Nevertheless, the monitoring reports are inconsistent, and often written descriptions of lessons rather than a detailed analysis of subject standards. The practice of monitoring pupils' books by departments as a way of monitoring subject standards is also inconsistent.

6.2 Leadership and efficiency

Management and leadership in the school are good. The school succeeds in creating a purposeful work ethos.

The governing body are very supportive of the school, know it well and take an interest in the curriculum and the school's links with the local community. There is a good partnership between the governing body and the school MT. The governing body monitors the school's examination results carefully and monitors pupils' standards of achievement through their contact with members of staff. The governors manage money very carefully.

The school is led well by a head who possesses a clear vision, the ability to plan and to deal well with people. He gives good support to pupils and staff and he has their respect. The other members of staff share the head's commitment to the school. Recently the school's energies have been directed towards its successful relocation on a new campus. There have been changes in the membership of the MT recently and, consequently, a number of members are new to their posts but are developing their managerial skills well at whole-school level. In addition, the MT is in the process of being restructured and rationalised, and this is also true of the school's pastoral management structure. All of this complements the vision of the head, governors and senior staff of a modern, appropriate structure for a school of its size.

The SDP (1999-2002) is of satisfactory quality. It was inherited by the head and is no longer a reflection of the current situation in the school. The draft version of the new SDP, which is of good quality, emphasises further development in the school's 'teaching and learning' policy which endeavours to improve teaching and raise standards by sharing good practice.

A link member of the MT monitors individual departments and teachers and there is a system of observing lessons, including observing within and across departments and faculties in order to monitor teaching and share good practice. However the monitoring of standards of subject work or of standards in key skills is not sufficiently rigorous.

With exceptions, departments are well led. Members of staff co-operate well to provide good curricular experiences for pupils. The quality of departmental documentation is uneven. With exceptions it is satisfactory. The quality of planning work is generally good. The DDPs are satisfactory.

With regard to subjects, a whole school vision is developed through the Academic Board and on the pastoral side, by a Pastoral Committee. Some members of staff serve on both committees and this is appropriate, as there is a close relationship between pastoral and academic arrangements.

The co-ordinators and the pastoral heads fulfil their roles effectively.

The head, the site manager and the governing body draw up the budget, and it is managed effectively by them. Good advantage is taken of the interest and expertise of members of the governing body to monitor. Usually, the school keeps to the sums designated in the budgetary headings given to the school by the LEA. Cost effectiveness is evaluated carefully. As maintenance costs of the large buildings are comparatively expensive due to cleaning and heating some rooms that are not often used, a revision of the budget has been arranged with the LEA to meet the cost. The school lives within its budget; it has succeeded in keeping a very small sum (approximately £33,000 of a budget of £2.4M) in reserve in 2001-2002 and there was a small loss in 2000-2001. The sum in reserve is much lower than the 5% recommended by the Audit Commission. There are appropriate long-term arrangements for spending the money received from parents. A small sum is paid monthly for photocopying and the remainder is saved in order to buy a mini bus over a period of time. Detailed attention is given to day-to-day spending by members of the MT and by the governors. The school responded appropriately to the seven points raised in the UA financial audit in 2001.

Although the number of small classes in Y12 and Y13 are not cost effective, they are important for the provision of post-16 Welsh medium education in the area. It has been possible to share the cost of providing three subjects by co-operating with another local Welsh medium secondary school, and this is good practice. Human and financial resources are managed effectively and efficiently and when considering the quality of school life, quality of education, examination results in general, and pupils' standards of achievement, the school gives good value for money.

Day to day communication is clear and the daily administrative process effective. The school's arrangements are clear to those working in it but there is some ambiguity in the documents as they are updated. With specific exceptions identified in this report, the school conforms to the statutory requirements and the recommendations of the National Assembly for Wales.

6.3 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

a) Staffing

The quality of staffing is good.

The school has suitable members of staff to meet curricular requirements and the qualifications of the majority correspond to the areas taught by them. There are 45 full-time teachers in the school, including the head, and there are 6 part-time members of staff. The pupil-teacher ratio is lower than the average for Wales, and this is good.

There is a good balance of experienced teachers and those who are comparatively new to the profession. Teachers in their first year of teaching are given good support by the departments, and they follow an appropriate programme of induction under the direction of the deputy head. The support given to teachers who are new to the profession is effective and appropriate information is provided for them when they arrive.

Each member of staff has a job description which gives details of specific responsibilities. When teachers teach outside their main specialism, they receive good support from heads of department.

Therefore teaching is at least satisfactory, and often good, and the standard of pupils' work rarely suffers.

The in-service training[INSET] provision is well organised. A clear policy document is provided which outlines the process and staff rights. The effectiveness of courses is evaluated and a report is given to the professional tutor and the head. The effect of INSET is generally good. Detailed discussions take place weekly within the MT on applications and school needs with regard to INSET. When making decisions, consideration is given to the needs of the individual, the department and the school in order to ensure balance. There is a detailed and appropriate programme on every aspect of school life for students following an initial training course for teachers.

The administrative and technical staff, librarian and SEN assistants make a very good contribution to school life. They offer good support in science, design and technology, the library and ICT.

b) Accommodation

In September 2000 the school moved to a new luxurious £8.5M site. The condition of the buildings is very good. Pupils are proud of their school and show respect towards it. The site is kept clean and tidy.

The location and plan of the school create a very good impression. Good quality facilities are provided for pupils and staff. Rooms are tailored for the subjects taught in them and are clustered in convenient faculties. The furniture is tasteful and modern facilities are to hand to promote teaching and learning. The storerooms and faculty offices are also convenient. In general, the departments make good or very good use of the learning environment. Almost without exception, the displays prepared are stimulating and there is a good balance between pupils' work and the support work prepared by teachers. In the best cases, the displays overflow into nearby corridors.

Through co-operation between the school, the authority and external contractors, the school has succeeded in putting to rights a number of basic deficiencies that came to light after moving to the new site. However, a number of problems remain. In many areas of the school, room temperatures vary from one extreme to the other. In a number of rooms the noise from extractor fans makes it very difficult for pupils and teachers to communicate orally. The shape of the business studies room is inconvenient and there is not enough room in it. The modern languages rooms are also small for large groups and one of them becomes overheated quickly. The learning environment for art is unsatisfactory.

The present facilities for physical education are of very good quality. It is expected that the new playing fields will be ready for use in September 2002.

The library is a pleasant working place but it is not formally supervised in the afternoon. There is a lack of books there but pupils make good use of the room when it is open for personal study. The school makes good use of the hall and drama theatre, the studios and the lecture room for specific activities. From time to time members of the public also use them.

Fire practices are held once a term and fire-fighting equipment is inspected annually. The majority of the portable electric appliances were tested in April 2001. However some appliances

were seen that had not been tested since 1997. In addition, the football posts are not anchored to the ground of the all weather pitch.

c) Learning Resources

The supply and quality of resources for learning are generally good and meet the requirements of the curriculum. In business studies there is a lack of Welsh medium resources. Practically without exception good use is made of what is available across departments. In art, however, the use of resources is unsatisfactory.

The quality of work sheets varies from satisfactory to very good. They are very good in Welsh. Generally they are good. Some work sheets in science contain too much information and there is no effort to adapt them to meet the needs of pupils of differing abilities.

The provision of computer equipment and software is generally good though not so good in science. The use of the interactive white board as a medium to promote teaching is developing well. All departments do not make the best use of the computing resources available and advantage is not taken of ICT as a means of gathering information, analysing data, modelling situations and improving the presentation of work across the subjects.

7. SUBJECTS AND AREAS OF LEARNING

7.1 Standards achieved by pupils

Welsh

Standards are good at KS3 and KS4. More able pupils achieve very good standards by the end of both key stages. In the case of middle ability and less able pupils, however, some satisfactory aspects are seen. There is a significant improvement in standards as pupils progress through the school. In Y12 and Y13, standards are very good.

The percentage of pupils gaining A*-C grades in GCSE Welsh Language over the past three years reached national norms. In Literature, standards were slightly above in 2000 and 2001. In the Advanced level and Advanced Supplementary examinations, they are substantially above those for Wales. In the statutory tests, the percentage gaining Level 5 or above was a little above the national norms in 2001 and substantially above in 2000.

Listening standards are very good throughout the school across the range of ability. In group work and classroom activities, pupils respond appropriately to each other and to teachers. At KS3 and KS4, standards of speaking vary from the satisfactory for lower ability pupils to very good in the case of more able pupils; in general they are good. Pupils of all abilities are eager to contribute; the majority can engage in sensible discussion when expressing an opinion and defending a point of view, interacting naturally in groups and reporting back to the whole class. Pupils take an effective part in role-play and in responding to literary texts. In the satisfactory examples, a significant number of pupils have an uncertain grasp of syntax. Sometimes they turn to English during group work or use English words and expressions, and mutation errors occur regularly.

In Y12 and Y13, speaking standards are very good. When discussing literary texts, students offer perceptive analytical comments on aspects of style and structure. They can modernise Middle Welsh texts with understanding.

Standards of reading again range from the satisfactory to the very good at KS3 and KS4; in general, they are good. More able pupils can read sensibly using intonation and emphasis

appropriately, but in the case of less able pupils, their skills of reading aloud are more rudimentary. Pupils follow individual reading programmes that are appropriate for their age and abilities and which lead the more able to more challenging books. In Y12 and Y13, reading skills are very good. Their work shows the influence of substantial background reading and they use cross-referencing and contrasting skills to a high standard.

Orally, KS3 and KS4 pupils use a good range of literary terms in the study of poetry and analysis of literary style. More able pupils express implicit meaning of texts, while middle and lower ability pupils summarise the content of verses and identify images in them. The same standards are to be seen in the written literary tasks. Y12 and Y13 students have a wide knowledge of literary terms and use them effectively when appreciating a poem or in analysis of other literary texts.

Pupils produce a wide range of written tasks in a number of forms and for different purposes at KS3 and KS4. The most able write interesting original material of a good length, and they have a sound grasp of a range of creative materials. Their syntax is sound and style includes idiomatic expressions. The work of a significant number of middle and lower ability pupils is marked by faulty syntax and spelling and some more able pupils also have difficulty with mutations at times. Y12 and Y13 students write in a very mature manner and to a high level of correctness. They have a good grasp of a range of different forms when completing creative and literary tasks.

Pupils with SEN make good progress in spelling, reading and writing.

English

Standards are good throughout the school.

At KS3, statutory test and assessment results are above the average for Wales.

Pupils speak with confidence, using a variety of structures and often a wide vocabulary. They are eager to learn new words, and use them with pleasure. They show an awareness of different registers of language, and can generally use them appropriately in both oral and written work. Their oral presentation of poetry is very good, leading to a greater understanding of the text and the sub-text.

Pupils read aloud well, with appropriate expression and understanding. Reading for pleasure is now developing well, and this raises the standards at this key stage.

Written work varies from the very good to the satisfactory; at its best, pupils produce lively, interesting accounts, articles and letters, using a wide vocabulary and varied sentence structure; creative work, stimulated by thoughtfully chosen classwork, is good. Pupils sometimes enhance the presentation of their work by using word processors, and seek information in reference books and on the Internet to answer some tasks. Spelling is often weak, and sentence structure sometimes faulty, but these improve through the key stage. Standards of pupils with SEN are very good.

At KS4, GCSE results in 2000 were above the average for the county and for Wales, and in 2001 were just below the LEA and Wales results.

Oral work is good, sometimes very good, with pupils at all levels showing an ability to give extended answers to questions, and to use language purposefully when working on a task in a

group or pair. Some pupils, particularly in the lowest set, show an ability to make supportive, constructive comments that help to improve the work of others.

Pupils in some groups show an understanding of the colour of poetry, responding positively to work in this genre. Pupils in lower bands have some difficulty in reading aloud unseen passages with unfamiliar vocabulary. Pupils respond positively to opportunities for role-play. Some pupils, in their coursework, show they were stimulated and enlarged by their study of Shakespeare.

Written work at this key stage still has frequent spelling errors, but shows an increasing grasp of register, and a wider vocabulary and sentence structure. Coursework varies in quality, with the best showing a good understanding of theme, character, structure and style.

Standards of pupils with SEN are sometimes very good.

In Y12 and Y13, results at A level and in the new AS level examination are good. Students are able to discuss literature in a purposeful, mature way, with good co-operation and process talk in group work. Their listening skills are very good. They show good, and sometimes very good, understanding of style and structure, both in their discussion and in their written work. Essays are well structured on the whole, with good use of vocabulary, literary terms and sentence structure, but with occasional infelicities of style and register.

Mathematics

Standards are satisfactory at KS3 and are good at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13.

At KS3, standards are satisfactory. In 2001, 63% of pupils reached Level 5 or better in the statutory assessments. This was slightly better than the results for 2000. Results compare favourably with those for Wales and the LEA.

At KS3, pupils can use and apply mathematics appropriately. Pupils understand number work and place value and use decimals, fractions, percentages and negative numbers accurately. They can also find answers to questions without using the calculator when the need arises. Able pupils carry out quite complex work by this method. The pupils' algebra work includes solution of simple equations. Able pupils interpret and enumerate formulae in symbols that are mathematically related. Every pupil can name shapes, produce graphs, interpret location and handle positive and negative co-ordinates according to their ability. They can enlarge shapes by various scale factors and they generally measure accurately. Standards fall where pupils are not completely confident in mental work and when they do not complete sufficient work in lessons. A significant number do not finish the work set nor attempt to complete work lost because of absence. Also some boys depend overmuch on others to complete work and cannot remember work carried out earlier. Pupils' grasp of subject vocabulary is insufficient.

At KS4 standards are good. In 2001 41.1% of pupils gained A*-C at GCSE, which is slightly below the LEA and Wales figures. Boys achieved much more success than girls. 93.8% obtained a A*-G grade, which is again slightly below the LEA and Wales figures. In the 2000 examinations, 39% of pupils gained A*-C grades, which is slightly below the LEA figure while 92% gained A*-G which is again slightly below the LEA and Wales. In 2000 girls succeeded much better than boys.

More able KS4 pupils carry out complex work; they can change subject and form quadratic graphs. These pupils have a good understanding of the work they carry out on perimeters, area and volume. They can also compute the area of a sector and the length of a segment when they know the size of the angle. They produce appropriate work on equations and inequalities and they can use suitable methods to solve problems. These pupils follow the work of the upper tier of GCSE and they accomplish a great deal of work during this key stage. There are good examples of neat, accurate work in using and applying mathematics. Pupils can give detailed reasons to explain relevant work. Middle ability pupils complete appropriate work on probability and other topics but a number have a tendency to produce faulty quadratic graphs since they do not show the parabolic curve. These pupils generally use a scale accurately and understand the work on equations. Less able pupils can carry out appropriate work and understand number and place value according to need. Standards are affected, particularly those of middle ability pupils, by their failure to listen closely enough and since the work is not completed regularly enough. They lose the opportunity to ensure that they understand the methods used. A significant number cannot recall what method is to be used to answer questions.

In Y12 and Y13, students have the opportunity to study pure mathematics, further pure, mechanics and statistics. In 2001, 100% of students gained A-B grades in pure mathematics and pure and applied mathematics, while 50% gained A-B in applied mathematics. In 2000 every student gained A-B grades in the pure mathematics and applied mathematics examinations and 66.7% gained A-B grades in pure and applied mathematics with 100% gaining A-E grades.

In pure mathematics, students can generally solve and factorise polynomials accurately. They can also utilise binomial expansions. In mechanics, they can deal with vectors and factors and there is substantial work on equations of motion. In statistics they can integrate to obtain probability and can understand how to find conditional probability.

Since the last inspection, the department has moved forward. Standards are now satisfactory in every lesson at KS3. However, some incomplete, untidy work containing errors is still found. The ability of pupils to apply their mathematical skills and knowledge has also improved.

Science

Standards of achievement are good at KS3, satisfactory at KS4 and are good in biology, chemistry and physics in Y12 and Y13.

In 2001, 45% of pupils succeeded in gaining level 5 or above in the national tests at the end of KS3. These results are substantially lower than those for the LEA and Wales and are unsatisfactory. The gap between boys' and girls' performance was 23% in favour of boys, a gap that has increased over the past few years. In 2000 59% of pupils succeeded in gaining level 5 or above in the national tests, and in 1999 45% of pupils gained level 5 or above.

At KS4 in 2001, 43% of pupils succeeded in gaining A*-C GCSE grades; this result is lower than the LEA and Wales' results. The gap between boys' and girls' performance was 19%, though girls' performance was better than boys' performance in 2000 and 1999. In 2000, 42% of pupils succeeded in gaining A*-C GCSE grades and in 1999 46% of them succeeded in gaining A*-C GCSE grades. 2000 and 1999 results were also lower than those for the LEA and Wales.

In A level examinations, biology, chemistry and physics results were good.

At KS3, standards of achievement are generally good; in Y7 and Y8, standards are good while standards in Y9 are satisfactory. Across the key stage, the best standards are found among more able pupils and standards are consistent across the three attainment targets – life processes and

living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. Pupils of all abilities make appropriate progress in their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. Pupils of higher ability have good knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts, particularly in Y7 and Y8, but the understanding of lower ability pupils across KS3 is satisfactory. Pupils' practical skills are well developed. When they have the opportunity, which is frequent in Y7 and Y8, pupils can follow instructions, handle equipment and apparatus safely, observe, measure in detail and record results to a good standard. They have a good awareness of a fair test, but their interpretation skills have not developed so well. Y7 and Y8 pupils' investigative skills have also developed well, but the emphasis on assessments means that their knowledge and understanding of Y9 pupils for the NC tests and assessments mean that their knowledge and understanding through scientific investigation have not developed as well. As a result their investigative skills of hypothesising, planning and evaluation are not as good.

At KS4, standards of achievement are satisfactory in biology, chemistry and physics. About three quarters of pupils follow the GCSE double science course with the remainder following the single science GCSE course in the time allocated for two subjects, apart from a small number of pupils who follow a CoEA course. Standards are generally better in Y11, and among higher ability pupils across the key stage; they have good knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and can recall previous work well. Middle ability pupils' knowledge and understanding are satisfactory, as is their ability to recall previous work. Pupils' practical skills remain good, but the opportunities for them to develop investigative skills are rare.

In Y12 and Y13, students' standards of achievement in biology, chemistry and physics are good. Students cope easily with the change from GCSE science to A Level. Students' motivation in the sciences is at least good. They can recall and apply knowledge to solve problems and they communicate well orally, using the appropriate terminology. They can discuss scientific concepts with understanding.

Across the range of age and ability pupils work well in groups when they have the opportunity, but because of the nature of the teaching, opportunities for pupils to research information from a variety of sources, and to solve problems, are few. Oral and written work of pupils across KS3 and KS4, is good, but because of the teaching methods, they have few opportunities to speak at any length, to write in an extended form or to produce original work. Pupils listen very well across the age and ability range. In Y12 and Y13, students' oral work is good; they talk maturely and discuss their work intellectually. Pupils' number work is good throughout the school. They can measure accurately, they use appropriate units, and use graphical methods to display data, although the use of more complex and varied graphical methods is not fully developed. The over-dependence of some pupils on a calculator to assist their computation impairs the development of their number skills. Word processing is used to present work, together with spreadsheets to display data in some groups, but pupils do not have the opportunities to use ICT to measuring and sensing work.

Design and technology

Standards of achievement are satisfactory across the school.

At KS3, standards are satisfactory. During the key stage, pupils experience work in resistant materials, and in food and textiles, and there is concentration on aspects such as designing and making, control systems, structures and materials. Designing skills vary and are uneven across the units. In general, these skills are satisfactory, but there is some good work. Investigative

work, and the production of ideas are good. Work on development of ideas, planning the making and evaluation is satisfactory and varies across the units. Sketching skills vary from satisfactory to good, but are satisfactory overall and the use of colour is effective. There are individual good examples and there is some creativity in the very best work. When modelling work is carried out, standards are good, and these experiences reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the design and make processes. The finished products are of a good standard and are useful items that meet specific requirements. Construction skills are good and in the majority of cases the finishing work is satisfactory or better. Pupils develop good knowledge and understanding in the CAD/CAM activities that occur across the units.

In the GCSE design and technology resistant materials course, standards are satisfactory. In Y11, pupils' responsibility for their own work is good. They give satisfactory attention to health and safety requirements in their practical work. They carefully achieve good construction and finishing skills in wood and plastics and produce items of a good standard. The standard of folio work is variable; generally, it is satisfactory. Often the initial investigative work is limited and the sketching satisfactory. Investigative work into materials and techniques is good. Though they produce and evaluate ideas, they do not always come to conclusions and use the information to develop ideas in depth. In the best folios, there is a little good ICT work including use of the Web and CAD. In Y10 most pupils familiarise themselves well with CAD and can create and amplify pictures and present measurements within specific tasks. Results of external examinations in this course over the past two years are satisfactory. The percentage of candidates gaining A*-C was lower than the national average.

In the GCSE industrial design and technology course in Y10, standards are satisfactory. Within the electronics project, pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to make PCBs and how the work offers possibilities for controlling devices, is developing well. So far in this new course, pupils cannot apply their knowledge sufficiently to develop ideas for similar projects. Graphical skills are variable and are weak among about a third of the group.

In the GCSE design and technology systems and control course in Y11, standards are satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes and co-operation are good as they solve problems confidently as a natural part of their work. Pupils' knowledge and understanding develop well through a sequence of exercises and activities, and use of good, appropriate resources. Practical work of constructing working models- often through combining materials, mechanical systems, computer control and pneumatics – varies from satisfactory to good. In the folios, there is detailed evidence of working through design processes. Graphical skills are good, and effective use is made of CAD/CAM to support the presentation of the products and folios of the most able. The percentage of candidates who gained A*-C in the external examinations last year was lower than the county and national average and was also lower than the preceding year.

In the GCSE design and technology food course, standards are satisfactory. Pupils co-operate maturely in groups. They discuss intelligently, come to conclusions and the majority can justify their decisions. The most able apply their knowledge to their design projects and relate the work to industrial processes. The standard of folio work ranges from satisfactory to good. The best folios all contain detailed records of working through design processes and of using ICT to support the various stages of the work. Use is made of the Internet, CAD and nutrition packages, together with use of the digital camera to develop the content and presentation of the folios. Where the folios are satisfactory, these aspects have not been developed to the same degree. The food sketching work is of a satisfactory standard. In the little practical work seen, standards are good. The percentage of pupils gaining A*-C grades in the external examinations over the past two years has been good and higher than the county and national percentages.

In the GCSE design and technology textiles course, standards are satisfactory. On the whole, practical work is of a satisfactory standard. Pupils achieve good standards in their creative skills including CAD work. The standard of construction and finishing is not as good. The majority can apply current knowledge about recent relevant developments in industrial systems to their design and make projects. Pupils develop good knowledge and understanding of fibres and fabrics, and of construction and creative skills, through notes, experiments and practical samples, and the most able make effective use of them to support and reinforce their design ideas. In the design folios, the standard of presentation of designs and knowledge and the use of ICT is satisfactory. A little creativity is in evidence in the work of some individuals. Standards of sketching are satisfactory. The work of annotation and development of ideas is not developed sufficiently in every case. The percentage of candidates who gained A*-C grades last year was fairly good, though lower than the preceding year, and was slightly above the county average and lower than the national figure.

In the GCSE design and technology graphical products course, standards are satisfactory. In Y10 standards of the work are satisfactory. The majority of the pupils work carefully and with interest, and as a result the presentation of work is good. Lettering work is developing well, and the graphical skills and use of colour are satisfactory. Evaluation tasks of ready made products and modelling work are well accomplished and these experiences reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding of design processes. In Y11, the standard of the projects varies from satisfactory to good. Pupils work within the contexts that interest them and often in real situations. Where the work is good, the folios are well-presented and the products are useful and of good standard. Pupils analyse the task with understanding and carry out thorough investigative work. The majority summarise the investigations and come to conclusions before creating a brief. Planning is simple and evaluation is detailed. The standard of freehand sketching varies; in general it is satisfactory. The majority make good, effective use of ICT including CAD/CAM as a natural part of their work, The percentage of candidates who gained A*-C grades in last year's examination was low, and was lower than the previous year and the county and national averages.

In Y12 and Y13, standards in the A level and Advanced Supplementary design and technology courses are satisfactory. In Y13 the small number of students who follow the course show readiness to work and some satisfactory or better work is developed as part of course work. Though they accomplish appropriate investigative work and produce initial ideas, they have only produced a little work so far as part of their main project, and because of this, this aspect of the work is barely satisfactory at the moment. Practical work is carried out carefully and accurately when making items that respond to clear needs and which are suitable for specific purposes. In the lessons, suitable opportunities and an appropriate work atmosphere are provided. Students developed good wood handling skills when producing items of household furniture. In Y12, the general standard of drawing and annotation is satisfactory. There are good individual examples of CAD work and practical work. When links with industry are developed, these experiences extend the work and offer more challenge and purpose to the task set.

Information technology

Standards are satisfactory at KS3 and KS4. Standards are satisfactory also in the Advanced Supplementary course.

In 2001 the percentage of pupils who succeeded in gaining grades A*-C was lower than the norms of the LEA and Wales. In general, pupils' performance in the subject is not as good as that in other subjects.

By the end of KS3, the great majority of pupils are confident users of ICT. There are good elements in the work of communicating and handling information. Pupils can use presentation software and a desktop publishing package to create purposeful presentations that combine different forms of information to meet the needs of different audiences. They are aware that ICT can be used to store and retrieve information, and the great majority are aware of the need to formulate questions carefully so as to collect useful information. The capability of middle ability and less able pupils to interpret the outcomes of their investigations has not developed sufficiently. On the whole, the great majority can use a spreadsheet to create a model of a real situation but a number have difficulty in explaining the effect of changing the variables. Overall, the substantial majority can explain the advantages and disadvantages of different types of software but their ability to consider the limitations of equipment is insufficient.

At KS4, pupils' understanding of the practicality and functionality of different types of software is generally good; their awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of different types of communication and information handling packages is good.

The standard of coursework is satisfactory. On the whole, pupils' ability to use a spreadsheet to model vehicles in a line of traffic and to calculate probability is good, as is their capability to use the computer to control devices. They show good understanding of the different methods used to extract and verify data together with the techniques necessary to frame more complex investigations. Although the written work in projects notes the main aspects to receive attention, pupils do not identify specific criteria to evaluate the success of the finished computer system. Their testing plans are not detailed enough and their final evaluations are, on the whole, too descriptive and not linked closely enough to the expected outcomes. In addition, pupils' ability to offer detailed answers to questions, orally and in writing, is insufficient.

Standards in the AS course in Y12 are satisfactory. On the whole, the practical work linked with the project is good. Though there are a number of good features about the written work, specific aspects, such as identification of success criteria, plans for testing and evaluation of the completed system is insufficient. Pupils' understanding of specific matters, such as methods of data protection, components of the computer and files and their organisation is generally good. Overall, pupils' responses to questions, orally and in writing, are sufficiently detailed.

Since the last inspection, the KS3 curriculum has been revised to include specific lessons for ICT and a scheme of work has been developed which meets the requirements of the NC. There has also been agreement on the contribution of individual subjects to the development of ICT capability, though the system has not developed to its full potential.

History

Standards of achievement are good throughout the school.

In recent years, pupils have attained around the national average for grades A*-C at GCSE. Over the same period, students have attained very good results at A level and, more recently, good results at AS level.

History is becoming an increasingly popular option choice at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13.

At KS3, many pupils display good skills in developing historical enquiry. They learn how to ask historical questions and, in particular, gain a good understanding of historical evidence. They evaluate sources well in terms of strengths, weaknesses and value. Pupils have a generally good knowledge and understanding of topics and events. Pupils are making progress in understanding interpretations of history but many still too easily misrepresent evaluating sources as a form of interpreting historical events. Pupils organise and present their work well. Many write clearly and thoughtfully; their standards are further improved by the consistently well-planned introduction and clarification in lessons of key vocabulary and terminology. There is good quality extended writing, although there is scope to develop this work more regularly in some classes. The very well-planned work for Y7 pupils with SEN enables them to achieve very good standards.

At KS4, many pupils studying GCSE move from a firm outline grasp of initial topics to good in-depth knowledge and understanding. Pupils generally apply their subject knowledge well to provide clear descriptions and narratives of personalities, events and issues. In addition, they provide clear, valid explanations, although these sometimes lack the depth and detail required for the higher grades. Pupils comprehend and evaluate historic sources very well, enabling them to support their judgements about the nature, significance, reliability and value of the evidence they consider. The more able pupils also make good use of background knowledge and understanding to assess skilfully the wider aspects of sources, such as their targeted audience or intended impact.

There is some good achievement in the CoEA course. Pupils develop a good grasp of the issues, especially the study of personalities and of social and cultural history. They also have good chronological understanding. However, if it continues at the current level, absenteeism will affect the achievement of a significant minority of pupils.

In Y12 and Y13, students have good levels of knowledge and understanding, and many are able to apply this very clearly to develop ideas and explanations in their written work. A considerable number are reluctant to deploy these skills in class discussions. They display a secure grasp of historical concepts and apply these well. Students have a very good understanding of historical evidence and make well thought-out use of it to support wider judgements and arguments, as well as evaluating it in its own right. Much written work is well organised, clearly written and draws well on a range of sources, including well-established historiography. The best work features carefully balanced consideration of evidence and interpretations and makes use of these to arrive at clear, well-presented analysis. A considerable amount of the remainder of the work shares some of these features and is often of a good standard. However, it does not move sufficiently from description and evaluation, to offer more interpretative, discursive and analytical perspectives.

Geography

Standards are good at KS3 and very good at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13.

At KS3, pupils develop subject skills and build up an appropriate vocabulary. They have substantial knowledge about the local area and can relate it to locations further away. In Y7, pupils show their increasing understanding of the elements of weather and how to record them. They use the Internet confidently to find facts and to identify patterns across the world. They investigate the school's microclimate enthusiastically and can handle scale. In Y8, a significant number of pupils respond well when handling conflict in land usage in the country's National Parks. They research profitably into the relationship between people and the environment and how the tourist industry can bring positive and negative conclusions to an area. They develop their research skills when considering industry. In Y9, through their study of a tropical rain forest, they realise how misuse of a fragile environment can have far-reaching effects on the lives of people and the ecosystem. Across the key stage, pupils make good use of a programme of fieldwork and visits. Their grasp of the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* [Welsh Curriculum] is increasing. However, there are individuals who are more confident orally than on paper and others who are unwilling to contribute to discussion or to answer questions. There is unfinished work in some books.

At KS4, standards are very good. Pupils gain further knowledge and understanding of the physical and human aspects of the subject. They explain the development of landforms clearly in their studies. They have a good idea of the factors that cause flooding on a local scale. They are aware of the danger and effect of world-wide warming. They study a range of places and environments with thorough understanding of the ways in which people and the environment interact. They can describe and explain rationally the changes in strategy used in areas that are popular with visitors, both mountain and coastal areas. They demonstrate their skills in literacy and numeracy in their course work, which is often of very good quality. They develop the ability to research a topic and to solve problems, such as the growth of multinational companies in developing countries. The work of a small minority of individuals is limited in terms of original knowledge, but there is very little evidence of underachievement across the ability range. The percentage of candidates who gained A*-C grades in the GCSE examinations last year was almost the same as the national average but all candidates gained A-G grades.

Y12 and Y13 students reach very good standards. They have an enthusiastic understanding of physical, human and industrial aspects; they make use of the relevant information effectively. They apply it and relate it very accurately to unfamiliar situations. In their work in class and in their assignments, they interpret statistical and numerical data very well. They make very good use of ICT. They work purposefully as individuals and in small groups to research/investigate economic changes in a specific region. They have good recall and their understanding is good as they prepare to meet external examination requirements. This reflects recent Advanced Level results where the percentage of students who reached A-B and A-E grades was substantially above the national average.

Standards, across the key stages, are higher than during the previous inspection. The department has made very good progress and had succeeded in dealing with the majority of matters noted in the report

Modern foreign languages

Standards of French are good throughout the school.

Over the past two years the percentage of pupils who followed the French GCSE course has been similar to that for Wales. In 2000 and 2001 GCSE results were very good. The results for Advanced Level, Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced Supplementary for the few candidates in French have also been very good. There were no Advanced Level candidates in 2000.

Oral standards are good at KS3 and KS4. Pupils' pronunciation is good. Y7-Y11 pupils frequently respond in an extended manner with little dependence on guidelines or teachers to conduct a conversation. Pupils can ask and answer questions. Pupils use good vocabulary and constructions, and the most able Y9 pupils and some of those at KS4 use a variety of verb tenses. They can express an opinion, though the opinion expressed is not often an extended one. At times, however, errors of pronunciation and grammar impair full comprehension.

Standards of listening and reading are good at KS3 and KS4. Pupils can follow authentic pieces of French in print, or on tape, noting the main points and arguments. At times, they use dictionaries naturally to assist them. Standards of reading aloud are good and standards of reading for enjoyment are acceptable.

Pupils' written work is good at KS3 and KS4. According to their linguistic experience, they produce essays and letters of an acceptable length using a variety of constructions, appropriate vocabulary, and in KS4 a variety of verb tenses. They can express a simple opinion. The quality of the work is impaired, particularly among the middle ability pupils, by errors in grammar, particularly verbal errors.

Pupils' good standards are characterised by their ability to re-use the same content in several language skills within varied, correct structures.

Oral standards are good in Y12 and Y13. Y12 students discuss abstract AS topics and Y13 students speak in an extended fashion expressing and justifying their viewpoints on A Level themes. Accent, idioms and vocabulary are good, particularly by some individuals but occasionally, the best standards are affected either by lack of fluency or by grammatical errors.

Standards of listening and reading are good in Y12 and Y13. Students can note many of the main points, responding in French. In addition, they often follow more abstract ideas.

They have adequate knowledge about France. They are mastering the necessary skills to sit the AS and A2 examinations.

Standards of writing are good in Y12 and Y13. Students produce essays, projects or structured letters that include good ideas, but standards are affected in a significant number of written responses by grammatical errors

Art

Standards of achievement are unsatisfactory at KS3 and satisfactory at KS4. They are satisfactory in Y12 and Y13.

Examination results at GCSE were unsatisfactory in 2000. However, they were similar to the Welsh average in 2001. Examination results at AS were below the LEA and Welsh average in 2001. Results at Advanced level were well below the LEA and Welsh average in 2000; they were much improved in 2001.

At KS3, pupils do not make progress in line with the expectations outlined within the NC. They make poor progress in the acquisition of skills, techniques and understanding, relative to their age and ability. Pupils are enthusiastic when undertaking activities, which include observational drawing, portraits and three-dimensional work using papier-mâché and card. Pupils do not exploit opportunities to develop an understanding of the visual language of line, tone, colour, pattern, shape, form and space, during these activities. Drawing from memory, feeling and imagination is also underdeveloped. Pupils in Y8 make efficient use of ICT to develop their own animations.

At KS4, pupils follow the GCSE course. The majority are working in two dimensions using a range of mark making techniques to generate work of a satisfactory standard. A small number of pupils demonstrate good standards of sketching skills and of manipulating clay as part of their project work. A number of pupils in Y10 lack confidence when developing new skills and have difficulty in concentrating on the task in hand. The use of ICT is underdeveloped at this level.

In Y12, students achieve satisfactory standards using a range of appropriate media including photography and computer software. Students are confident and motivated when developing their understanding. There are some examples of good work in sketching and painting. In Y13, students demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of other artists to inform their investigative work.

Music

Standards are good at KS3 and KS4 and are very good in Y12 and Y13. This is reflected in the external examination results, which are consistently higher than the county and national averages.

Standards of singing are satisfactory at KS3. Sessions start with appropriate vocal warming-up work, but in some classes, singing is quiet and lacking in confidence. Pupils can sing in three and four parts in Y7. Pupils respond enthusiastically to performing on the keyboards throughout KS3, and standards are good. They can perform a range of music confidently, both individually and in groups. At KS4 and in Y12 and Y13, standards of vocal and instrumental performance are good with individual very good examples as they prepare for external examinations.

Standards of composition work are good across the three key stages. There is progression throughout KS3 in terms of development of composition skills. Pupils can use keyboards and ICT equipment to compose variations on a melody in Y8 and to develop musical ideas in a clear structure in Y9. They can also compose pieces based on the music of other cultures. There is further development at KS4 as pupils compose in more ambitious forms, and by the end of the key stage there are interesting examples of pupils composing in styles that reflect their own musical tastes. The composition work is good in Y12 and Y13 with examples of very good work when composing in specific styles and in free compositions. Across the school, good use is made of ICT to improve the composition work.

The standard of appraising is good across the school and is a particular feature of the music lessons. Throughout KS3, pupils consistently use their appraisal skills to improve their performance and composition work. They can use appropriate technical vocabulary and

concentrate their attention on musical elements. At KS4 and in Y12 and Y13, pupils and students can discuss specific musical features of different periods and set works that are part of the syllabus.

The school has a strong tradition of extra-curricular activities and in particular, presentation of musical shows

Physical education

Standards are good throughout the school.

In cricket in Y7 and athletics lessons in Y7, pupils listen, concentrate on tasks and are ready to improve their performance. They throw a ball with accuracy and show consistently good skills when fielding. The running technique of the majority of pupils is correct. In a gymnastics lesson in Y9 and in dance in Y8, the vast majority of pupils have tension, flow and clarity of shape, and there are good examples of pupils using their imagination to improve their performance. In the remainder of the hockey and cricket lessons in KS3, there is a lack of pace and energy in the work and lack of opportunity to work physically hard.

At KS4, pupils are well prepared for the GCSE examination. There is a good relationship between the theory and practical work and pupils' attitudes towards hard work are particularly good when testing fitness. In the statutory physical education lessons, the performance of a few Y10 pupils is lack-lustre. In striking and fielding games and hockey there is lack of accuracy and lack of a rapid response as they play the game. The games break down because of the lack of effort by some pupils.

A Level students take good advantage of the guidance and support of the department. Students are always ready to discuss and analyse concepts and can relate the information to their activities.

The department works hard during every lunch-hour and after school to run a full extra-curricular programme. Pupils respond very well to the opportunities and the department has a strong tradition of competing fairly and successfully against other schools.

A substantial number of pupils have represented the school at a county level and a significant percentage has brought the highest honour to the school by representing Wales.

Religious education

Standards of achievement are good at KS3 and KS4.

At KS3, pupils across the ability range reveal good knowledge and understanding of the units of work studied. They develop sound knowledge and understanding of Christian credos and practices and the main other religions represented in Wales. Through effective work in groups their awareness of the questions and matters raised by their experience of the natural world is extended, and of the ways in which credos and religious practices handle these questions and matters. The most able pupils develop the ability to ask perceptive questions and they enlarge substantially on their observations. They write short purposeful answers that show good awareness of the syllabus. Less able pupils show good knowledge of the unique features of

religious traditions and understand the symbols linked to the religions. Written work of the most able does not always reflect their extended oral responses.

An appropriate religious education course is provided in Y11 and in Y10 every pupil follows the GCSE short course. KS4 pupils co-operate very well in groups to share and collect information, come to a conclusion and present information accurately. They have a good knowledge about some key figures in the history of religions and the way they have influenced their communities. When discussing racism, the majority can detail the dreams of Martin Luther King. They create their own dreams reflecting their views and hopes on current moral and social issues. In group discussion, they are honest and on the basis of their knowledge they can generalise and form an opinion. They offer valid reasons for their personal responses to religious credos and practices.

Since the last inspection, standards at both key stages have developed to be consistently good

Religious studies

Standards are good at KS4.

In the GCSE religious studies course in Y11, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the course. Pupils are confident in sharing information or in expressing their ideas and personal feelings on spiritual, moral, social and contemporary issues. Presentation of the material is accurate and varied according to the levels of ability of pupils. They develop a range of skills that enable them to investigate religion and human experience for themselves. It is disappointing that no-one is following the course in Y10.

Personal and social education

Standards of achievement are satisfactory at KS3 and are good at KS4.

Class tutors teach PSE in one weekly lesson at both KS3 and KS4. Some of the learning is reinforced in the morning registration periods. The majority of pupils appreciate the experiences that they receive during the PSE programme.

At KS3 pupils know about the effects and risks that follow the use of a range of legal and illegal drugs. They have an understanding of the relationship between diet and good health, and of the ways in which an unhealthy diet can affect an individual's way of life. They know about the different types and methods of contraception and their effectiveness, and they know how to use safer sex methods. In some lessons, the opportunity to develop some matters fully is restricted; the presentation is over-long and the opportunity for pupils to ask questions and to discuss is short. They listen intently in different situations and respond appropriately. However, the opportunities to convey their own feelings and to discuss their own personal feelings are rare in some classes.

At KS4, pupils know how to revise their learning and set priorities for developments and targets for improvement. In group work, they discuss moral and social matters maturely. They discuss

matters such as injustice, prejudice, and racism sensitively. They accept responsibilities in the life of the school, such as assisting Y7 pupils with their reading. By the end of Y11, they know about the relevant opportunities that are available to them in education, training and employment and they know how to use the careers' service.

By the end of the key stage, pupils show maturity in dealing with current moral and personal issues that are appropriate for their ages.

Business Studies

At KS4, standards are satisfactory. In Y11, standards are good and they are satisfactory in Y10. In Y12 and Y13, standards are good.

GCSE AS and A Level results are better than those for the LEA and Wales.

Y10 pupils have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of gross and nett pay, voluntary and compulsory deductions, income tax and how pay is computed. Y11 pupils have good knowledge and understanding of interview technique. They can hold mock interviews successfully and maturely. KS4 pupils connect the work with the real business world and links with the local economy ensure a familiar forum for discussion that leads to higher standards. Pupils benefit from the experiences that arise from visits to local industry, visiting speakers and work experience. Course work is successfully completed.

Y12 students have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of marketing. They take advantage of practical marketing problem solving work and this ensures a real understanding of marketing problems in the business world. Y13 students have good knowledge and understanding of the external business environment. They link the work well with the business world and with current and contemporary affairs. The level of discussion of business elements among the students is good. Students' method of preparing revision sessions themselves, giving good quality presentations, promotes good standards. Y12 students complete essays and respond satisfactorily to data while Y13 students accomplish this work well.

At KS4, pupils' oral and written communication is satisfactory. Orally, there is overuse of English terminology and in writing there are some problems with syntax. Number work is satisfactory with some good examples. ICT work is satisfactory.

In Y12 and Y13, students' oral and written communication is good; number and ICT work is satisfactory. Students work well in teams to solve problems and when preparing and presenting information.

At KS4, there is not much evidence of constructive comments by the teacher in pupils' books so as to improve work and raise standards. In Y12 and Y13, there are constructive comments of this type in the students' files.

Drama

Standards are good throughout the school

Results of external examinations in the subject have been variable over the past two years. In 2001, A level and Advanced Supplementary results were substantially above the national norm

but the number of pupils who gained A*-C GCSE grades was substantially lower. In 2000, A level results were higher than the national results while GCSE results were substantially lower.

KS4 pupils of all abilities concentrate throughout the lesson and respond enthusiastically to the tasks set for them; this is the key to their progress. There is a similar response at KS3 but not every middle and lower ability pupil concentrates and listens to others sufficiently in Y9.

Pupils have good knowledge of the background and elements of the Greek Theatre in Y8 and of stereotypical characters in the Morality Plays in Y9, and they use this information to create appropriate scripts. The standard of their written work varies from satisfactory to good; in general it is good. In the satisfactory examples, there are problems with syntax and English words are used on occasion. When doing group work, pupils interact well.

At KS4, pupils are confident in tackling ideas and scripting, and after completing the scripts, they turn enthusiastically to practise and develop ideas for their stage performance. Standards of initial performance are good, with appropriate attention to body posture and voice. They can work well without supervision. Written work in the folio tasks is good, but there are some basic language errors in the work of the middle and lower ability pupils. Y10 pupils have the opportunity for the first time to follow the Technical Skill element of the GCSE examination.

Pupils with SEN are fully integrated into the subject and make good progress.

In Y12 and Y13, students' written work, as they respond to the demands of the Advanced Supplementary and Advanced Level courses, is good, and there are very good examples. The standard of performance of Y13 students is very good. They are willing to experiment with a range of dramatic forms to express ideas and feelings so as to produce inventive impromptu work and collage to a high standard. They script well, show an infectious enthusiasm while preparing to perform and use the school's excellent resources to their full potential. They succeed in getting under the skins of characters and appreciate the different emotions that create conflict between them.

Home Economics, Child Development

In this GCSE course, standards are satisfactory

Investigations during the child studies are satisfactory. Through these reports, the majority of pupils come to know children well and increase their knowledge about the child's intellectual, emotional, physical and social development. In Y11, the standard of folio work which supports practical work is satisfactory with some individual good examples. Pupils interpret the task well and investigate, collect and analyse information, and produce and develop ideas satisfactorily.

Planning is simple and evaluation is thorough. Practical tasks are satisfactory. In Y10, pupils cooperate well in groups. They interpret situations with understanding, and, on the whole, possess good knowledge about food and nutrition and can apply it to their practical work. The percentage of candidates who gained A*-C grades in the examination last year was satisfactory; it was lower than the previous year's and was lower than the county and national averages.

Psychology

Standards of achievement are good. Students attained high grades in the modular examination.

Currently, the course is offered through the medium of English in Y13 only.

Students have made very good progress this year. The standards of their written work shows an increasing depth of knowledge and an understanding of the many aspects of psychology as well as the several approaches to its study. Standards also show a development from the descriptive to the analytical and, by now, a high standard of concluding and evaluation.

Students are able to recall and also apply previously learnt information from the breadth of theoretical and methodological approaches in psychology to demonstrate their skills in synopsis. The standard of coursework is high; students have chosen realistic topics, conducted valid experiments, used appropriate statistical techniques to analyse data and offered appropriate interpretations.

Students have a sound grasp of the requirements of the examination and are preparing accordingly. They contribute orally but not to a length and depth that enhances their learning significantly.

Media Studies

Standards are good at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13.

At KS4, pupils are eager learners. They show knowledge of a variety of media and media techniques. Their knowledge of appropriate terminology is good, and they develop good analytical skills, particularly of the methods of creating an image. They respond well orally to questions in class and in group discussion. In Y11, they produce extended oral answers showing their understanding of the basic concepts that underpin the subject, and their ability to analyse sensibly and to detect bias. Their understanding of language and its nuances develops well as they discuss the contemporary material presented to them, and analyse, in Welsh, material that is presented in English. They produce interesting coursework by the end of the key stage, and show good use of the modern media equipment that is available to them. GCSE results in 2001 were satisfactory; they represented good progress for those who sat the examination.

Results at A level are good, as were results in the new AS level examinations in 2001. In Y12, students make good use of the media equipment to experiment with creating, for example, a 'News Broadcast', showing skills of scripting, presentation, filming and editing. In both Y12 and Y13, students work well together, giving extended thoughtful oral answers, using subject terminology with familiarity and ease. Their analytical skills develop well. Coursework is interesting, but occasionally lacks closer analysis of the development of ideas, and greater depth in the evaluation section.

In the last inspection, concern was expressed that, compared to the girls, boys were underachieving in Y12 and Y13. This is no longer the case.

GNVQ Information Technology

Standards of Y12 students following the intermediate GNVQ information technology course are satisfactory. They complete assignments that correspond to their ability.

Students have a satisfactory understanding of how to save copies, use a spellchecker and prepare for printing. Also they have a satisfactory understanding of production of Web pages using text, pictures and sound to link pages.

Students do not work independently enough and they do not take full responsibility for their work. There is some link with the public sector. Absence impairs progress and affects standards. Standards of oral communication are satisfactory.

GNVQ Engineering

Standards are good.

A small number of students follow this foundation course. They are confident when developing data-handling skills and use computer aided design software to a good standard. Their products are of a good standard and they record their progress in a clear and well-ordered manner.

8. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Progress since the last inspection

The school has responded appropriately to the key issues noted in the last inspection in 1996. As a response to the inspection, a relevant action plan was created and in it a number of courses of action for each key issue was noted. The developments were reported in the governing body's annual report to parents according to the statutory requirements.

Six key issues were noted in the inspection report in 1996.

Key Issue 1

There has been a general improvement in standards. Standards were good or better in 63% of the lessons observed during this inspection and this is an increase of over 20% in comparison with 1996. Standards were unsatisfactory in 3% of the lessons observed during this inspection; this is a reduction of 5% in comparison with the 1996 inspection.

It was judged that there was an improvement in standards in science, design and technology and information technology at KS3; standards in ICT at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13 remain a key issue.

By developing mentoring systems and setting targets there has been an improvement in the achievement of pupils of middle and lower ability. There has also been an improvement in the boys' achievements. In the summer of 2001 in GCSE examinations, the boys' achievements in a number of performance indicators were equal to, or better than, the girls'. In the core subjects, only in Welsh was the girls' performance better than that of the boys. This pattern is also reflected in KS3 statutory tests.

Key Issue 2

A number of strategies have been implemented to promote awareness of Welsh identity amongst pupils. Maintaining and developing whole school strategies for promoting and expanding the use of the Welsh language by pupils in every aspect of school life is one of the main issues in the draft SDP for 2002-2005. Standards in Welsh across the curriculum remain a key issue.

Key Issue 3

The school's assessment policy has been reviewed and a number of steps taken to promote improvement have been noted. Information on pupils' achievement is gathered and analysed each term. These analyses are shared with heads of department, heads of year and class tutors. Good use is made of this information by class tutors in the mentoring periods to promote improvement, but the use made by heads of department of the information is inconsistent.

Key Issue 4

The school responded in full to this key issue by ensuring sufficient time for religious education at KS4 and physical education at KS3 and KS4. Each pupil has a co-ordinated programme of PSE through the provision of one period a week, and at KS3, the programme contains special units for IT.

Key Issue 5

The school responded in full to this key issue. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is very good, and the implementation of the SEN policy and the Code of Practice is good.

Key Issue 6

The school co-operated with the LEA, investing much time to ensure a successful transfer to buildings on a new campus in September 2000. New and successful strategies and procedures have been established for the site. The work environment for each subject and class is now very good.

In addition to responding to the key issues, there has been an increase in standards in Welsh, mathematics at KS3 and KS4, science at KS3 and in Y12 and Y13, geography, religious education, modern foreign languages, history at KS3, drama at KS4, music at KS3 and in Y12 and Y13, physical education and business studies in Y12 and Y13.

There has also been improvement in the quality of teaching. It was judged that the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 97% of lessons during this inspection and this is an increase of approximately 7% as compared with the 1996 inspection.

8.2 Key issues for action

The school needs to:

- raise standards in art at KS3;
- maintain the good standards and improve the satisfactory ones;
- continue to give attention to raising standards in the key skills as a tool for raising subject standards, especially ICT standards at KS4 and in Y12 and Y13, and extend across the curriculum the good standards seen in the four language skills in Welsh as a subject;
- build upon the early foundations of the self-evaluation system found at school and faculty level and pay specific attention to monitoring standards in the subjects and in the key skills;
- ensure whole-school strategies to foster all pupils' awareness of the value of partnerships with industry as a tool for raising subject standards;
- pay appropriate attention to a number of statutory requirements:
 - provide statutory religious education for Y13 students;
 - ensure all pupils are part of daily collective worship;
 - ensure that there is a home-school agreement and that the information provided for parents meets the current expectations.

APPENDIX

School Data

A. Basic Information About the School

Name of the School	Ysgol Morgan Llwyd
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Type	Secondary - LEA Maintained/ Community
Age range of the pupils	11 – 18+
Address of the school	Cefn Road Wrexham
Post-code	LL13 9NG
Telephone number	01978 315050

Name of the Headteacher	Mr Huw Foster Evans
Date of appointment	September, 2000
Chairman of the Governors	Dr Philip Davies
Registered Inspector	Mr Gareth W. Roberts
Date of the inspection	22 – 26 April, 2002

B. School Data and Indicators

<i>Number of pupils in each year group</i>								
Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	133	153	135	119	99	53	40	732

<i>Number of teachers</i>			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	45	6	47.89

<i>Staffing information</i>	
Pupil : teacher ratio, except for special classes	15.26 :1
Average size of classes	21.8

<i>Attendance percentages during the three full terms before the inspection</i>								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	The whole school
Spring 2002	93.0	92.6	91.6	89.5	89.5	84.0	91.0	90.8
Summer 2001	91.8	91.9	88.1	88.5	51.4	74.0	80.0	82.4
Autumn 2001	94.3	92.5	92.8	90.4	90.9	84.5	90.0	91.6

<i>Number of pupils excluded during the previous 12 months</i>	<i>14 temporary</i>
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C. Results of National Curriculum Assessments 2001

Results of National Curriculum KS3 Assessments : 2002
Total Y9 pupils : 120
Percentage of pupils at each level

WE	Teacher Assessment		D	A	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		School	0	0	0	0	0	8	28	33	27	4	0
		National	0	0	1	0	1	6	22	32	28	10	0
	Test	School	0	3	0	-	-	5	24	33	32	3	-
		National	0	2	1	0	0	4	21	32	28	11	0
EN	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	9	26	39	22	4	0
		National	0	1	1	0	3	10	22	34	21	8	0
	Test	School	0	3	0	-	-	6	19	41	23	8	-
		National	0	3	2	0	0	9	22	33	19	10	0
MA	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	1	0	0	6	19	36	22	16	0
		National	0	1	0	0	1	10	23	25	26	13	1
	Test	School	0	3	1	-	-	9	25	32	23	7	-
		National	0	6	1	0	0	8	22	22	27	13	0
SC	Teacher Assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	19	36	22	19	4	0
		National	0	1	1	0	1	10	24	31	23	9	0
	Test	School	0	3	2	-	-	10	41	24	18	3	-
		National	0	4	1	0	0	9	22	29	24	10	0

Percentage of pupils achieving at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either Welsh or English			
according to teacher assessment		by test	
In the school:	43%	In the school:	42%
In Wales:	49%	In Wales:	46%

D - Pupils who have been disapplied under statutory arrangements from part or the whole of the National Curriculum
A - Pupils who failed to register a level because of absence
N - Represents pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence.

Ysgol Morgan Llwyd
Summary Report of achievements of pupils aged 15
2000/2001.

LEA/School No.
665/4032

RE2

GCSE, ELQ (1) and Equivalent Achievements

Number of pupils aged 15 who were on roll in January 2001: 112
Percentage of pupils aged 15 who:

	Entered 5 or more GCSEs	Achieved GCSE and vocational qualifications equivalent to five or more GCSE grades		Core Subjects	Average GCSE/GNVQ points
	or equivalent	A* to C	A* to G	Indicator (2)	score per pupil
School 2000/2001	89	53	89	35	43
LEA Area 2000/2001	82	46	81	32	35
Wales 2000/2001	86	50	85	37	38
School 99/00/01	90	55	90	36	44
School 98/99/00	88	55	87	36	44

	Entered at least one ELQ (1) course GCSE or achieved equivalent	Entered one or more GCSE or achieved equivalent	Achieved GCSE and vocational qualifications equivalent to One or more GCSEs at grades		Achieved at least 1 GCSE short course - grades A* to G or equivalent	Achieved no graded GCSE or equivalent	Achieved one or more ELQ(1) only	Did not achieve a GCSE GCSE short course ELQ (1) or equivalent
			A* to C	A* to G				
School 2000/2001	96	96	71	96	4	4	1	4
LEA Area 2000/2001	93	90	67	89	20	11	3	8
Wales 2000/2001	96	94	73	92	40	8	3	5
School 99/00/01	98	97	73	97	7	3	1	2
School 98/99/00	99	97	71	97	6	3	1	1

GCSE results in selected subjects

Percentage of pupils aged 15 who:

	Entered any GCSE in	Achieved a GCSE grade		Entered any GCSE in	Achieved a GCSE grade	
		A* to C in English (2)	A* to G in		A* to C in Welsh (2)	A* to G in
School 2000/2001	93	58	93	89	65	89
LEA Area 2000/2001	85	51	84	41	25	41
Wales 2000/2001	89	54	88	61	35	60
School 99/00/01	95	60	95	88	64	88
School 98/99/00	97	60	96	86	62	86

	Entered any GCSE in	Achieve a GCSE grade		Entered any GCSE in	Achieved a GCSE grade	
		A* to C in Mathematics (2)	A* to G in		A* to C in Science (2)	A* to G in
School 2000/2001	94	41	94	86	43	86
LEA Area 2000/2001	86	38	83	86	48	84
Wales 2000/2001	89	44	86	89	47	87
School 99/00/01	93	42	91	90	44	90
School 98/99/01	90	41	88	89	42	89

(1) Entry Level Qualification : CoEA or CoA

(2) For information about which syllabuses are included in each subject area see Notes for Guidance.

GCE A AS level and GNVQ Achievements

Number of pupils aged 17 who were on roll in January 2001: 39

Number of pupils aged 17 who were entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or AS equivalent: 34

Number of pupils aged 17 who were entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or AS equivalent or GNVQ equivalent: 34

Percentage of pupils aged 17 entered for 2 or more A level examinations or AS equivalent or GNVQ equivalent who achieved a points score of (1)

	0	1 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 14	15 to 19	20 to 24	25 to 29	30 or more
School 2000/2001	0	0	6	24	3	26	24	18
LEA Area 2000/2001	1	5	15	24	5	18	12	19
Wales 2000/2001	1	6	13	23	16	19	11	12

Percentage of pupils aged 17 entered for 2 or more A level examinations or AS equivalent or GNVQ equivalent who achieved 2 or more A level examinations or equivalent at grades (1)

Average score per candidate

	A-C	A-E	Average score per candidate	
			Entering 2 or more A levels or AS or GNVQ equivalent	Entering 2 or more A levels or AS equivalent
School 2000/2001	79	94	21	21
LEA Area 2000/2001	63	91	19	19
Wales 2000/2001	62	93	18	18

Number of pupils aged 17 who were entered for fewer than 2 GCE A level examinations or AS equivalent 2

Percentage of the pupils aged 17 entered for fewer than 2 A level examinations or AS equivalent who achieved a points score of

	0 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 15	Average score per candidate
School 2000/2001	100	0	0	1
LEA Area 2000/2001	100	0	0	1
Wales 2000/2001	70	25	5	3

All pupils aged 17 entered for GCE A level examinations or AS equivalent

Average score per subject

School 2000/2001	7.3
LEA Area 2000/2001	6
Wales 2000/2001	6

Number of pupils aged 17 who were awarded a GNVQ or NVQ between 1 September 2000 and 31 August 2001

	GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ Level 2	GNVQ Advanced or NVQ Level 3
School 2000/2001	4	0

D. The Evidence Base of the Inspection

17 inspectors spent a total of 52 inspection days at the school and 235 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. A cross-section of tutorial periods, morning services, departmental meetings and extracurricular activities were observed. Interviews were arranged with members of the MT, heads of department and tutors, together with members of staff, including ancillary members of staff with specific responsibilities.

A cross-section of able, middle ability and less able pupils' work throughout the school was inspected. Also, additional examples of pupils' work were seen when visiting classrooms, workshops and laboratories. Their work was discussed with pupils and formal interviews were held with pupils selected to represent the different year-groups

All, the documentation presented by the school before and during the inspection was scrutinised and analysed. Pre-inspection meetings were arranged with the school MT, the staff, the governing body and the parents. 18 attended the parents meeting and 55 parents' questionnaires were returned, together with three remarks by parents.

E. Composition and Responsibilities of the Inspection Team

Name	Role	Sections of the report	Subjects (section 7)
Gareth W. Roberts	Registered Inspector	1, 2, 3.1, 3.2, 5.3, 6.2, 8.2, Appendix	Modern Languages
Griff Ch. Morris	Lay Inspector	4.2, 4.3, 5.7, 6.3	
Tudur Williams	Core Team	5.4	Welsh, Drama
Heddwyn Evans	Core Team	4.1, 5.5, 6.3	Religious Education, Personal and Social Education
Peter Maddocks	Core Team	5.2, 6.1, 8.1	Science
Catherine James	Core Team	5.1, 5.6	English, Media studies
Peredur Francis	Core Team	5.3	Mathematics
Haydn Davies			Physical Education
Beryl Portlock			Design and Technology, Home economics – Child development
Alun Morgan			History
Elwyn Bowyer			Geography
Graham Edwards			Art, Engineering
Alun Llwyd			Music
Gwynne Jones			Information technology, contribution to science
Richard Williams			Business Studies
Delyth Williams			Psychology
Neil T. Jones			Contribution to Science

The inspectors wish to thank the school governors, head, staff, pupils and parents for their willing co-operation during the inspection.