

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

**NANTYGLO COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL  
POND ROAD  
NANTYGLO  
BRYNMAWR  
BLAENAU GWENT  
NP23 4WX**

**School Number: 677 4073**

**Date of Inspection: 8<sup>TH</sup> – 12<sup>TH</sup> November 2004**

**by**

**Mr P Carter**

**Inspector number: W262/16926**

**Date: 13<sup>th</sup> January 2005**

**Under Estyn contract number: T/13/04**

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Nantyglo Comprehensive School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of Nantyglo Comprehensive School took place between 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> November 2004. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr Peter Carter undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving this report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

## LIST OF ACRONYMS IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| ACCAC   | Awdurdod Cymwsterau Cwricwlwm ac Asesu Cymru (The Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales) |
| A level | Advanced level   |
| AS      | Advanced Subsidiary  |
| AVCE    | Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education   |
| CIF     | Common Inspection Framework  |
| CoP     | Code of Practice   |
| EBD     | Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties   |
| EBP     | Education Business Partnership   |
| ELQ     | Entry Level Qualifications   |
| EWO     | Education Welfare Officer  |
| GB      | Governing Body   |
| GCE     | General Certificate of Education   |
| GCSE    | General Certificate of Secondary Education   |
| GNVQ    | General National Vocational Qualification  |
| HoD     | Head of Department   |
| HoY     | Head of Year   |
| KS      | Key Stage  |
| ICT     | Information and Communication Technology   |
| IEP     | Individual Education Plan  |
| INSET   | In-Service Education and Training  |
| MLD     | Moderate Learning Difficulties   |
| NC      | National Curriculum  |
| NFER    | National Foundation for Education and Research   |
| NVQ     | National Vocational Qualification  |
| PSE     | Personal and Social Education  |
| SAT     | Standard Assessment Task   |
| SDP     | School Development Plan  |
| SEN     | Special Educational Needs  |
| SENCO   | Special Educational Needs Coordinator  |
| SER     | Self-Evaluation Report   |
| SMT     | Senior Management Team   |
| UA      | Unitary Authority  |
| WAG     | Welsh Assembly Government  |
| Y       | Year   |

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Nantyglo is an 11 – 18 mixed community school serving the areas of Nantyglo and Blaina in the Blaenau Gwent Unitary Authority (UA). There are 593 pupils on roll including 63 in the sixth form. The numbers of male and female pupils are approximately equal.
2. The areas served by the school are economically and socially disadvantaged. Thirty- three per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, a figure well above the national average of 15.7%. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language.
3. Forty-two pupils have statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN), the great majority of which relate to Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) and, to a lesser but increasing extent, to Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD). Low levels of literacy have been identified by the school with over 50% of pupils entering Y7 with reading ages well below their actual ages. Provision for pupils with SEN is fully integrated.
4. The senior management team (SMT) consists of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and two assistant head teachers. All have been in post since before the last inspection.

### The school's priorities and targets

5. The school has clear aims to raise pupils' achievements and expectations, promote the professional development of members of staff and maintain the quality of the accommodation. Priorities related to the raising of pupils' achievements are addressed through development plans for:
  - general issues;
  - improving achievement,
  - improving teaching,
  - continuing Performance Management,
  - developing the work of subject departments and teams,
  - monitoring lessons,
  - celebrating pupils' successes,
  - the use of targets to support pupils' learning,
  - improving attendance,
  - improving pupils' key skills,
  - curriculum development, and
  - monitoring performance.
6. The school's Self Evaluation Report (SER) is organised into eight sections. The first seven address each of the key questions of the Common Inspection Framework (CIF) in turn and the final section deals with progress made since the last

inspection. Graded judgements have been made for each of the seven key questions together with lists of evidence on which the judgements have been based. In four of the questions (one, two, five and seven) a split grade (two / three) has been awarded. Specific points within each section are not linked explicitly to evidence.

## Summary

7. Nantyglo Comprehensive School is an improving school. It has made good progress in addressing the key issues from the last inspection. It is making good progress in tackling the objectives identified in the school development plan. Particular improvements include the raising of pupils' standards of achievements within a caring and supportive environment. There is, however, some inconsistency in the rate of improvement across the curriculum and in the rigour with which progress is monitored and reviewed.

### Summary of grades

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

### KS3 and KS4

#### Standards of achievement

#### Standards achieved in the six subjects inspected

| SUBJECT                | KS3 | KS4 |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| English                | 2   | 2   |
| Mathematics            | 3   | 3   |
| Welsh second language  | 3   | 3   |
| Information Technology | 3   | 2   |
| History                | 3   | 2   |
| Art                    | 2   | 3   |

8. There are good features and no important shortcomings in English at both stages, information technology and history at key stage (KS)4 and art at KS3.
9. Good features outweigh shortcomings in Welsh second language and mathematics at both key stages, in information technology and history at KS3 and in art at KS4.

10. Members of the inspection team inspected the standards that pupils achieve in six subjects. The following table shows the standards achieved overall in these subjects at KS3 and KS4.

| <b>GRADE</b>                                | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>PERCENTAGES IN THE LESSONS INSPECTED</b> | 6.3      | 47.9     | 43.8     | 2.1      | 0        |

11. There are no important shortcomings in the standards pupils achieve in over half the classes inspected. In almost all of the other classes inspected the good features outweighed some shortcomings. There are important shortcomings in only a very small minority of classes. These figures are above the current national targets of 50% grades one or two and 95% grade three or above
12. Pupils with SEN make good progress and generally achieve good standards in relation to their abilities.
13. At all stages the great majority of pupils achieve good standards in key skills. Their communication skills are generally good. Speaking and listening skills are slightly better than those in reading and writing but good progress is being made in this area as a result of recent initiatives. Most pupils can use ICT effectively to support their learning. Numeracy skills, although satisfactory overall, are less well developed than other key skills.
14. In recent years, pupils' attainment in KS3 assessments in English, mathematics and science has, in most cases, been slightly higher than that of pupils in similar schools in Wales. Although there is some variation year on year, the overall trend is upward. The most recent results are the best to date. Results in science have been consistently higher than those in the other two core subjects.
15. Performance in GCSE examinations has improved during recent years. Although the rate of improvement has varied, the overall trend is upward. Significant progress has been made in the numbers of pupils attaining five or more grades A\* to C, and in the numbers attaining grade C or above in all three core subjects.
16. Overall, the performance of pupils in GCSE examinations is close to the average for schools in Wales with a similar intake. Although girls' attainment is higher than boys' the gap between them has narrowed in recent years. The unsatisfactory attendance of a small but significant minority of pupils has limited their attainment.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

17. Standards achieved in personal, social and learning skills are mostly good. However, although pupils make good progress developing their knowledge of the culture of Wales they seldom use the Welsh language except in Welsh lessons. Their bilingual competence is therefore not developed enough.
18. A well organised PSE programme and good quality assemblies help promote pupils' spiritual, social moral and cultural development. All pupils, however, do not receive their entitlement to a daily act of collective worship. The school has recently won the Green Flag gold award and, as a consequence of activities related to this, pupils have a sound understanding of sustainable development and ecological issues.

## The quality of education and training

19. The following table shows the quality of teaching at KS3 and KS4 in the six subjects inspected.

| <b>GRADE</b>                               | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>PERCENTAGE IN THE LESSONS INSPECTED</b> | 10.4     | 45.8     | 39.6     | 4.2      | 0        |

20. The school has exceeded the targets set by The Welsh Assembly Government that teaching should be at least good in 50% of classes and at least satisfactory in 95% of classes.
21. In almost all lessons observed good features outweighed shortcomings. However, in a few cases there is some lack of variety in learning and teaching approaches and infrequent use of stimulating materials.
22. Lessons are planned well and structured and in almost all of them pupils are made aware of projected learning outcomes. There are good relationships between staff and pupils leading to good rapport in lessons. Pupils are treated fairly and expected to behave appropriately.
23. Assessment is organised well and the school makes good use of target setting for individual pupils and carefully monitors their performance.
24. There is a very good range of learning and teaching styles within and across subject areas. This includes a good balance between theory and practice.
25. In most respects, learning experiences meet statutory requirements as well as the needs of learners. Pupils generally make good progress between years and key stages. An appropriate range of subjects is offered leading to suitable levels of accreditation.
26. The curriculum enables pupils to develop key skills and the school has recently been awarded the Quality Mark of the Basic Skills Agency for its work in this area. A range of strategies has helped pupils develop their communication skills. However, the use of information and communications technology (ICT) in learning and teaching is inconsistent across the curriculum. The monitoring of pupils' ICT and numeracy skills is insufficiently coordinated at KS3.
27. Very good links with primary schools enable pupils' transition from KS2 to KS3 to take place smoothly and effectively. Relationships with parents are good. Parents are provided with helpful information about the work of the school and the progress pupils make. Good links exist between the school and colleges of further and higher education as well as with businesses and other employers in the community.
28. Pupils are cared for well and receive good quality support and guidance. Weekly bulletins alert members of staff to policy updates and current issues. Pupils receive good careers guidance. The school council gives pupils a voice and their views are taken into account by teachers. Heads of Year play important and effective roles in the provision of pastoral care.

29. Good strategies are used to monitor and improve attendance and punctuality and have led to recent improvements. Attendance, however, remains unsatisfactory.
30. Pupils with SEN are supported well through the range of learning experiences provided for them. They make good progress.
31. The school uses effective measures to tackle bullying and inappropriate behaviour. A comprehensive PSE programme ensures that pupils cover issues of racial discrimination and equal opportunities effectively.
32. Appropriate health and safety and child protection arrangements are known and understood by teachers and used to help provide a safe, secure and caring environment. Pupils are confident that concerns about issues such as bullying will be dealt with quickly and sensitively when they are reported.

### **Leadership and management**

33. The school has clear aims which are known, understood and shared by governors and staff. These aims underpin and are reflected in the work of the school.
34. Leadership is effective in providing clear direction. The head teacher and SMT have initiated suitable procedures to facilitate effective middle management. Whilst middle management is successful in the provision of pastoral support it is more variable in the provision of academic support in all subject departments and teams.
35. Governors are very supportive of the work of the school. They play an important role in financial management and in overseeing development planning. However, they are not involved closely enough in the school's day-to-day operations such as monitoring and evaluation procedures.
36. Self-evaluation is a developing aspect of the school. The systems which have been established are generally comprehensive but are not yet operating to their potential.
37. Monitoring of classroom practice and pupils' work is well established. However, there is some lack of clarity in identifying good features and shortcomings.
38. Development planning, and particularly, the setting of targets for individual pupils, has brought about measurable improvements since the last inspection. Departmental development plans, however, are not detailed enough. Progress made towards targets set in these plans is not reviewed rigorously and consistently.
39. The staff as a whole is experienced, well qualified and has sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the curriculum. The deployment and quality of the support provided for pupils with SEN is good and sometimes very good.
40. Resources are generally deployed effectively and efficiently to achieve value for money. Nevertheless, pupils' use of text books to support their homework, and their access to the library and ICT facilities are limited.
41. The overall quality of accommodation is good and, in most respects provides a stimulating learning environment for pupils and students. However, some classrooms do not have blinds or adequate sound proofing. In these classes pupils and teachers can have difficulty in ensuring good quality learning.

42. The school is balancing well the cost of provision against its effectiveness. Provision overall is helping pupils and students from a variety of academic and social backgrounds to reach their potential and is providing them with a good quality education appropriate to their needs.

### The sixth form

#### Standards of achievement

##### Standards achieved in the subjects inspected

| SUBJECT                | GRADE |
|------------------------|-------|
| English                | 2     |
| Mathematics            | 2     |
| Information technology | 2     |
| History                | 2     |
| Art                    | 2     |

43. In the sixth form the standards achieved by students show good features and no important shortcomings in all subjects and classes. No students were undertaking courses in Welsh second language in the school at the time of the inspection.
44. Members of the inspection team inspected the standards that students achieve in the above subjects. The following table shows the standards achieved in the sixth form overall in these subjects. These statistics, however, are based on a very small sample of lessons.

| GRADE                               | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4 | 5 |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|---|
| PERCENTAGE IN THE LESSONS INSPECTED | 11.1 | 77.8 | 11.1 | 0 | 0 |

45. Grades attained at Advanced level have been improving steadily in the last few years and the most recent results are close to national averages. The numbers of students who choose to continue their education into the sixth form has been gradually increasing, as have the numbers going on to further and higher education.

#### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students

46. Students develop personal and social skills and the ability to work independently. They have good interpersonal skills and can speak with confidence about their work and aspirations. They make good progress in their spiritual and moral development, showing awareness of important issues and a willingness to become involved in fund-raising work for charities.

#### The quality of education and training

47. In all of the subjects inspected teaching was good with no important shortcomings. The following table shows the quality of teaching in the subjects inspected.

| GRADE                               | 1 | 2    | 3    | 4 | 5 |
|-------------------------------------|---|------|------|---|---|
| PERCENTAGE IN THE LESSONS INSPECTED | 0 | 88.9 | 11.1 | 0 | 0 |

48. Teachers ensure that students are clear about the progress they are making. Students know their current, predicted and potential grades and understand what they need to do in order to improve. Monitoring of their progress is carried out rigorously by teachers.
49. An enrichment curriculum has been introduced recently in the sixth form and is making a positive contribution to the development of students' personal, social and learning skills. The school has entered into partnership arrangements with neighbouring institutions to broaden the range of subjects offered to students.
50. Good transition arrangements are used well to ease students' induction into the sixth form. The sixth form committee enables students to participate in the management of the sixth form. Students are provided with good advice and support about careers and applying for courses in further and higher education institutions.

### **Leadership and management**

51. The leadership and management of the sixth form is closely linked and in harmony with those of the whole school. They are effective in the promotion of high standards through the setting and monitoring of students' academic targets.
52. Monitoring, self-evaluation and development planning in the sixth form are integrated into whole-school procedures. Systems for monitoring students' progress are good and communication within the sixth form is very good. Self-evaluations take students' views, expressed informally or through the sixth form committee, into account.
53. There is good access to computers and private study facilities for students in the sixth form.

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

54. Eight key issues for action were identified in the last inspection report. They focused on:
  - I. Raising standards in key skills.
  - II. Raising standards of achievement in Welsh at KS3, GNVQ Manufacturing at KS4 and in other subjects where shortcomings were identified in the report, particularly underperformance by boys.
  - III. Improving the quality of teaching.
  - IV. Developing strategies to improve attendance.
  - V. Improving arrangements for assessment, recording and reporting.
  - VI. Inclusion of pupils from the Learning Support Unit into the whole school.
  - VII. Pupils' spiritual development, religious education in the sixth form and provision for a daily act of collective worship.
  - VIII. School development planning.
55. The school has acted on all the key issues and has made particularly good progress in literacy, target setting, inclusion and religious education in the sixth form.
  - I. Good progress has been made in raising standards in key skills, particularly pupils' literacy skills.

- II. Standards of achievement in Welsh second language at KS3 have improved significantly. The GNVQ Manufacturing course has been removed from the KS4 curriculum. There has been a general improvement in standards achieved in almost all subjects. The proportion of classes where standards are good or better is considerably higher than in the last inspection. The difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls has been much reduced.
- III. There have been important improvements in the quality of teaching and the range of teaching strategies used. The teaching in many more lessons at all stages and across the curriculum is judged to be good or better.
- IV. Good use has been made of strategies to improve attendance resulting in steady, year on year improvement in the rate of attendance.
- V. Very good progress has been made in eliminating inconsistencies in assessment, recording and reporting with especially good use made of target-setting procedures with individual pupils.
- VI. Pupils with SEN are now successfully integrated and included. Good practice is shared effectively between staff in the Learning Support Unit and subject departments.
- VII. Provision for pupils' and students' spiritual development, particularly assemblies and lessons in religious education and some other subjects, is much improved. Although good attempts have been made to devise effective and workable procedures, all pupils do not receive their entitlement to a daily act of collective worship. Students in the sixth form have a suitable timetable allocation for religious education.
- VIII. Improvements have been made to the overall quality of school development planning. Senior managers monitor standards and provision within and across departments. The SDP is, however, for one year only and does not form part of a longer-term plan.

## **Recommendations**

In order to build upon the progress already being made the school should:

1. continue to improve national curriculum (NC) and external examination results and address the shortcomings in subjects identified in this report;\*
2. continue to improve attendance by developing further the strategies already in place;\*
3. increase the role of governors and middle managers in monitoring, evaluation and development planning and promote rigour, detail and consistency;\*
4. continue to widen access to and extend the use of text books, the library and ICT facilities;
5. continue to improve the accommodation and resources as funds become available;\* and
6. meet statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship and in respect of the information provided in the school's prospectus.

\*These recommendations are addressed in whole or in part in the current SDP.

## Standards

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

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

56. The school's judgement was split between grades two and three. The findings of the inspection team broadly match those of the school's own evaluation.

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

#### Standards of achievement

The following tables show the standards that pupils achieve in the six subjects inspected.

| SUBJECT                | KS3 | KS4 |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| English                | 2   | 2   |
| Mathematics            | 3   | 3   |
| Welsh second language  | 3   | 3   |
| Information Technology | 3   | 2   |
| History                | 3   | 2   |
| Art                    | 2   | 3   |

57. There are good features and no important shortcomings in English at both stages, in information technology and history at KS4 and in art at KS3. Good features outweigh shortcomings in mathematics and Welsh second language at both stages, in information technology and history at KS3 and in art at KS4.

| GRADES AWARDED AT KS3 AND KS4   | 1   | 2    | 3    | 4   | 5 |
|---------------------------------|-----|------|------|-----|---|
| PERCENTAGE IN LESSONS INSPECTED | 6.3 | 47.9 | 43.8 | 2.1 | 0 |

58. The standards achieved in the lessons inspected show that the school is exceeding the targets set by the WAG that standards should be at least good (grade 2 or 1) in 50% of classes and at least satisfactory (grade 3) in 95% of classes. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in the standards achieved by pupils.

59. Pupils with SEN make good progress and generally achieve standards which are good in relation to their abilities. The most able pupils generally achieve good standards.

60. Where there are shortcomings, particularly at KS3 but also in some classes at KS4, pupils' knowledge and understanding are less well developed and they lack the confidence necessary to make good progress.

61. All pupils have individual targets set for them to work towards. These targets are linked to NC levels at KS3 and external examination grades at KS4. Targets are firmly based on evidence of pupils' performance from a range of assessments as well as judgements about their potential. In general, most pupils make good progress towards achieving their targets.

62. At both key stages the great majority of pupils achieve good standards in key skills. Their communication skills are generally good. Speaking and listening skills

are slightly better than those in reading and writing but good progress is being made in this area as a result of initiatives to promote and develop pupils' literacy skills.

63. Pupils' numeracy skills, although satisfactory overall, are less well developed than other key skills. In most subjects pupils use number well but often hesitantly and with limited confidence. Most pupils make effective use of ICT to support their learning. They use it for different purposes including accessing information and enhancing presentation.
64. Pupils generally achieve acceptable standards regardless of their social background except for a small minority whose poor attendance restricts the progress they can make.
65. In recent years pupils' attainments in statutory KS3 assessments in English, mathematics and science have, in most cases, been slightly higher than those of pupils in similar schools in Wales. Although there has been some variation in year-on-year performance, the underlying trend has been upward. The most recent results are the best to date. Results in science have been consistently higher than in the other two core subjects whilst those in English have fluctuated most.
66. At KS4, performance in GCSE examinations has improved over the same period. Although the rate of improvement has varied according to the balance of ability in different year groups the overall trend is upward. Significant improvements have been made in the numbers of pupils who attain five or more grades A\* to C and in the numbers attaining a grade C or above in all three core subjects.
67. Although recent results at KS4 are below the averages for the UA and Wales, performance is very close to the average for schools in Wales with a similar intake. While girls' attainment is higher than boys', the gap between them has been narrowing recently and is no longer significant. The unsatisfactory attendance of a small but significant minority of pupils has limited their attainment.
68. A small proportion of pupils, including some with SEN, undertake Entry Level Qualifications (ELQ) in a limited range of subjects. Most attain good results. A smaller proportion of pupils are not entered for examinations because of their unsatisfactory attendance.
69. The underlying trends since the last inspection show a pattern of continuing improvement and the overall raising of standards of achievement.

### **Progress in learning**

70. In the six subjects inspected pupils make good progress in gaining knowledge and developing practical skills and theoretical understanding. As they progress they gradually become more proficient in applying their knowledge, skills and understanding in new and less familiar situations.
71. Pupils know and understand the targets set by teachers for their future achievement. They make frequent reference to them in discussions about their work. As they progress, they become increasingly aware of their personal

strengths and areas for development. They understand many of the major factors that affect their achievement and know what to do to improve standards.

72. Most pupils across the ability range make good progress towards fulfilling their potential. At the key transition points in their education they are suitably prepared for moving on to the next stage.

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

73. Most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They work well in lessons showing good levels of engagement with topics. In most lessons they participate actively, show interest in their work and sustain good levels of concentration. Where there are shortcomings, for example in a number of classes at KS3, pupils are more passive and reluctant to show interest.
74. The behaviour of most pupils is generally good both in class and in the public spaces around the school. In a minority of cases however, mainly at KS3, occasional instances of low-levels of disruptive behaviour impede progress in learning in classes.
75. The great majority of pupils understand how they are expected to behave and respond positively. They have good relationships with each other and with members of staff. They are polite to adults in the school and to visitors.
76. Attendance is unsatisfactory. Steady progress has been made in each of the last five years in reducing the number of absences. Much good and effective work is being done by the school and the education welfare officer (EWO) to drive up attendance levels. A small minority of pupils are, however, resistant to these initiatives. A similarly small minority are absent from examinations and therefore do not gain qualifications. Punctuality at the start of sessions and lessons is generally good.
77. As pupils progress through the school the great majority make increasingly good progress in developing their independent learning skills. At KS4 most pupils demonstrate appropriate organisational and study skills. The PSE programme helps them to develop the ability to improve and continue into the next stage of learning.
78. Most pupils make good progress in their personal, social and wider development. They work cooperatively with each other showing care and respect. A small minority of pupils, mainly at KS3, do not always act responsibly.
79. Pupils are aware of other cultures and understand that they differ from their own. They show respect for different cultures and traditions.
80. Pupils gain sound knowledge of the world of work, particularly at KS4 where they benefit from suitable experiences in work-related education. These experiences help them to relate well to the community beyond their school.

### **The sixth form**

81. Students in the sixth form achieve good standards overall. The following tables show the standards that they achieve in the subjects inspected.

| SUBJECT                | GRADE |
|------------------------|-------|
| English                | 2     |
| Mathematics            | 2     |
| Information technology | 2     |
| History                | 2     |
| Art                    | 2     |

| GRADE AWARDED (6 <sup>TH</sup> FORM) | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------------------------|------|------|------|---|---|
| PERCENTAGE IN THE LESSONS INSPECTED  | 11.1 | 77.8 | 11.1 | 0 | 0 |

82. These statistics are based on a small sample of lessons.
83. There are good features and no important shortcomings in all of the subjects and classes inspected in the sixth form. No students were undertaking courses in Welsh second language in the school at the time of the inspection.
84. The overwhelming majority of students make good progress towards attaining their agreed targets. Their learning targets are based on the evidence of their previous performance and on judgements made by teachers about their potential. Students know how well they are working and understand clearly what they need to do to make progress or maintain standards.
85. In recent years students' attainments have improved. More students enter the sixth form and more go on to university. The most recent results at Advanced Level are close to the national averages.
86. Students make good progress in developing their key skills. They also make steady but significant progress in acquiring new knowledge, skills and understanding.
87. Students develop personal and social skills and the ability to work independently. They have good interpersonal skills and can speak with confidence about their work and aspirations. Their attendance and punctuality are good. They behave in a mature and responsible way and act as good role models for younger pupils in the school.

## The quality of education and training

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

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

88. The school's judgement was split between grades two and three. The findings of the inspection team broadly match those of the school's own evaluation.

#### KS3 and KS4

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

89. The following table show the quality of teaching in the subjects inspected at KS3 and KS4.

| GRADE                               | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4   | 5 |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|-----|---|
| PERCENTAGE IN THE LESSONS INSPECTED | 10.4 | 45.8 | 39.6 | 4.2 | 0 |

90. There are no important shortcomings in the teaching of over 56% of lessons in the six subjects inspected. This exceeds the WAG target of at least 50% of teaching being awarded grades one and two. There are important shortcomings in very few lessons. The quality of teaching is good with no important shortcomings in 53% of KS3 classes and 61% of KS4 classes. The quality of teaching in lessons taught by other teachers in the school matches the quality observed in the six subjects inspected.
91. In almost all lessons observed good features in teaching outweighed shortcomings. However, in a small minority of lessons there is some lack of variety in learning and teaching approaches and infrequent use of stimulating materials.
92. Lessons are planned and structured well. In almost all lessons pupils are aware of projected learning outcomes. These outcomes are revisited at the end of the lesson to provide the opportunity for reflection on what has been achieved.
93. There are good relationships between pupils and members of staff in classes. Pupils are treated fairly and expected to behave appropriately. Pupils are praised for their efforts and this encourages a positive learning atmosphere. In a minority of lessons there is some background chatter that has a negative effect on the learning environment.
94. Teachers are well qualified and demonstrate good subject knowledge. They are aware of recent developments in their subject and the impact of staff development and training has a positive effect on the quality of teaching. In art, for example, team teaching is used effectively and draws upon the expertise of individual staff.
95. In most lessons teachers use a range of appropriate methods and resources to engage pupils. In some subjects such as English, effective use is made of interactive whiteboards to stimulate and motivate pupils in their learning.
96. Teaching provides equality of opportunity for all pupils. Pupils of all abilities, including those with SEN, are enabled to make progress in raising the standards of their achievements.
97. Teachers meet the individual needs of all pupils by helping to set targets for progress and improvement. The practice of setting targets is a strength of the school. Progress that pupils make is monitored and reviewed by teachers at regular intervals.

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

98. Assessment is well organised. Appropriate systems are used to ensure that learners' achievements are assessed fairly, accurately and regularly. Comments are written to help pupils understand how they can improve. In a minority of cases marking tends to be generous. There is some variation between subjects in the extent to which guidance about routine marking is followed.
99. Assessment procedures meet statutory requirements and those of awarding bodies for recording and accrediting learners' achievements.
100. Pupils are engaged in the processes of assessment and target setting. In the majority of subjects, individual targets based on NC levels or examination grades are written in the front of pupils' workbooks, thus involving pupils in their own progress.
101. Reports to parents are useful and informative. They are, in most cases, detailed and provide precise targets for improvement, with clear links to NC levels of attainment or examination grades.

### The sixth form

102. Teaching has good features and no important shortcomings in all of the subjects inspected. The following table shows the grades awarded for teaching in the subjects inspected.

| GRADE                               | 1 | 2    | 3    | 4 | 5 |
|-------------------------------------|---|------|------|---|---|
| PERCENTAGE IN THE LESSONS INSPECTED | 0 | 88.9 | 11.1 | 0 | 0 |

103. Although these figures are based on a small sample of lessons, the quality of teaching observed in other subjects matches the quality in the subjects inspected.
104. Students are clear about the progress they are making. They know their current, predicted and potential grades and how to improve. Teaching meets the requirements of the various regulatory bodies and students' progress is assessed and recorded regularly and accurately.
105. There is a very good range of learning and teaching styles within and across subject areas including a good balance between theory and practice. Students are well motivated and the level of challenge for them is appropriately high.
106. The marking of work is undertaken rigorously and provides clear targets for improvement for students. School reports are informative and provide a helpful account of what has been achieved with suggestions for further improvement.

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

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

107. The school graded this key question as grade 3, over-emphasising shortcomings in provision for daily worship, bilingualism and entrepreneurial activities.

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

108. The curriculum meets the aims set out for pupils of statutory school age in the Education Act 1996. It provides pupils, including those with SEN, with the opportunity to obtain appropriate qualifications.
109. The curriculum provides effective continuity and progression between key stages and is flexible enough to meet the needs of pupils and students. At KS4 a small group of pupils with SEN follow an alternative curriculum with some opportunities to integrate into the mainstream option groups if considered appropriate. Also at KS4 a small group of pupils follow vocational courses at a local college on one afternoon a week. These courses meet the needs of these pupils well.
110. Access to the sixth form is open and the school has established partnerships with other schools and colleges to extend the range of AS, A and vocational courses which it can offer. At present, a small number of students are involved in these arrangements.
111. A range of strategies, both at whole-school level and department level, has raised the standards in pupils' literacy significantly. Subjects also make a suitable contribution to other basic and key skills and the school was awarded the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark in 2004. However, the use of ICT to deliver aspects of some subjects is limited and the monitoring of numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum is insufficiently co-ordinated.
112. In the sixth form a well-designed enrichment curriculum enables students to further develop their personal and key skills. Students very much value this opportunity.
113. A wide range of extra-curricular activities during lunch times and after school contributes to pupils' personal development. Homework clubs and additional tutoring help to raise standards of achievement. Visits to places of interest locally, in other parts of Wales and abroad enrich pupils' learning experiences in many subjects.
114. The school is effective in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a well designed PSE programme together with contributions from subjects.
115. School assemblies make an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual development and among the subjects, religious education in particular challenges pupils to consider the deeper questions in life.
116. Opportunities to explore moral and ethical issues are provided throughout the curriculum. Through support for charities and help for less able pupils students show concern and care for others.
117. The school encourages pupils and students to develop their cultural awareness through its curriculum, visits to theatres and museums and through extra-curricular activities. Relationships within the school are good and there is a supportive ethos between pupils and between staff and pupils.

118. Parents are kept fully informed of school activities and achievement through newsletters. Pupils' progress is communicated effectively by certificates of achievement, yearly reports and parents' evenings. The school takes every opportunity to celebrate success through local media. Community leaders visit the school regularly.
119. Very well established links with primary schools ensure smooth transition from KS2 to KS3. The mathematics, English, science and physical education departments, together with the school's ECO committee, have effective curricular links with feeder schools.
120. Induction programmes for the sixth form and students' preparation for higher education are well established and involve visits to colleges and universities.
121. In KS3, KS4 and in the sixth form the curriculum overall meets legal requirements. The provision of PSE, work-related education and careers education and guidance follows national guidelines. The school does not comply with the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.

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

122. The world of work features in the PSE framework in all key stages. There are productive links with Careers Wales, Gwent. They advise pupils on choices at KS3 and KS4 and help organise appropriate, well-monitored work experience in years 10 and 12. The enrichment curriculum in the sixth form provides sound advice on future employment and entry to higher education.
123. Pupils recognise the characteristic features of their locality and Wales in general when undertaking tasks set in the Welsh context. Visits to places of interest, residential courses at Llangrannog and involvement in Eisteddfodau contribute to Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig. However, bilingual signs are not widely used around the school and incidental Welsh outside Welsh second language lessons is rarely used.
124. The school makes effective arrangements for promoting equality of access to the curriculum and opportunities for all to achieve their potential. The use of learning support assistants, alternative curricula and extra-curricular activities are successful in tackling social disadvantage.
125. Sustainable development is an outstanding feature of the school. Recycling, energy minimisation and the promotion of healthy eating have resulted in the school achieving the Green Flag Gold Award of the ECO Schools Project.
126. Through the many links the school has established with local employers, Compact, work experience, visiting speakers and involvement with the ECO schools award, teachers, parents and pupils are well acquainted with local employment needs.
127. A range of subjects provides learning experiences which enable pupils to develop skills such as problem-solving and decision making. At KS4 the Dynamo project helps develop entrepreneurial skills and in the sixth form the Business Dynamics

course provides advice on setting up a business. However, there are no active enterprise schemes running in the school.

128. The process of target setting at all key stages is well developed and has encouraged pupils and students to take more responsibility for their learning. The learning experiences provided by the school allow the majority of pupils and students to acquire the appropriate knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to lay down the foundations for lifelong learning.

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

|   |
|---|
| <b>Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b> |
|---|

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

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

130. The school provides a good level of support for its pupils and successfully promotes a caring community. Pupils believe that staff are supportive, approachable and listen to them. Effective links exist with the EWO, educational psychologist, local police and other support services.
131. Homework diaries are used well as a means of informing parents and maintaining a weekly link between school and home. The links between the school and local employers are good, involving initiatives such as the Dynamo project in Y9 and Y10 and Compact arrangements at KS4. Pupils benefit from these arrangements.
132. Parents and pupils receive useful information about the various educational options available to pupils in the school. Individual pupil interviews, an informative option choice booklet and topics in PSE and careers education equip pupils to make informed choices.
133. Sixth form students receive good advice on subject choices, careers, completing university central applications service (UCAS) forms and higher education through a well-organised enrichment curriculum. The sixth form committee has a role in the organisation of events and plays a part in the management of the sixth form.
134. Very good arrangements are used to facilitate the smooth transfer of pupils from Y6 into Y7. A well-organised induction programme, which includes visits, shared projects and sports activities, and pertinent topics in PSE quickly help pupils settle in. A recent English project is further enhancing transition and developing pupils' literacy skills. An experienced head of year is accessible to both pupils and parents.
135. The school gives good pastoral support. Form tutors and heads of year monitor both pupils' behaviour and academic progress, although mentoring of academic progress is less well developed.
136. The school has very good systems in place for monitoring attendance and, to a lesser extent, punctuality and truancy. In addition to morning and afternoon registration, teachers mark registers during each lesson of the day. There are

good links with the EWO and appropriate action is taken promptly where there is a cause for concern.

137. Good records to track pupils' personal and social development are kept. Members of staff are kept informed through weekly bulletins. Several initiatives, such as OASIS, the Behaviour Intervention Group, Outreach and the alternative curriculum give good assistance to pupils who are experiencing difficulties.
138. The school together with the careers service provides good careers education and guidance. Pupils write their own action plans following an interview with the careers service. The majority of pupils benefit from work experience. In Y9 and Y10 they engage in entrepreneurial activities through the Dynamo Project.
139. There are appropriate guidelines in the school handbook covering health and safety. Good quality risk assessments are undertaken for school visits. Contractors and visitors to the school premises have to identify themselves and display a visitor's badge. Fire drills are carried out and equipment checked by the fire services.
140. There are designated first-aiders. Minor medical ailments are recorded and accident report forms completed where necessary. Very good systems are in place to ensure accidents are appropriately handled and recorded. Health and safety matters for pupils are suitably covered in the PSE programme.
141. The school has detailed child protection information in the staff handbook. There is a named person who takes responsibility for this and informs staff and newly qualified teachers of his role and their responsibilities.
142. The school council and sixth form committee are effective forums for raising pupils' and students' concerns and bring issues to the attention of staff.

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

143. The Learning Support Department makes very good provision for pupils with a wide range of SEN. Pupils with SEN are identified in Y6. On entry they are taught in small groups in most subjects in the Learning Support Department. Pupils with SEN taught in the mainstream classes are supported well.
144. A committed team of Learning Support Assistants supports the work of the department effectively. The SEN policy sets out their responsibilities clearly under the direction of the head of department. They have developed good specialist skills in their work and all staff in the department work well as a team.
145. Statutory requirements are met and the school's response to the Code of Practice is good. Pupils have good quality individual education plans. Targets are discussed and monitored on a regular basis. Statements of SEN are reviewed effectively annually and parents are actively encouraged to attend review meetings. External agencies are used effectively.
146. A variety of appropriate strategies is used to support pupils to reach their potential. Pupils with SEN make good progress, consistent with their abilities. Pupils in mainstream with specific learning difficulties receive the support of an

experienced specialist teacher. They achieve well and make good progress in these lessons.

147. At KS4, close links have been developed with a local college of further education. It provides appropriate part-time courses for targeted pupils as part of the alternative curriculum. Pupils identified with literacy difficulties are withdrawn for one lesson a week to reinforce and improve these skills. Good progress is made in these lessons.
148. There is a strong commitment in the department to improve the behaviour of an increasing number of pupils with EBD. A youth worker is permanently based at the school. Behaviour intervention strategies have been used to good effect at KS3 and KS4.
149. Every effort is made to integrate pupils with SEN into the mainstream. Pupils in the Learning Support Department are socially integrated into mainstream registration periods and physical education lessons. The curriculum at KS3 for pupils with SEN is broad and balanced. At KS4 every pupil with SEN follows a curriculum which meets statutory requirements.

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

150. The school supports all pupils sympathetically, especially those with learning difficulties and behavioural problems. Support for gifted pupils is less well developed.
151. Travellers' children and pupils from ethnic minorities are well received and catered for by the school. Structured form tutor periods and PSE lessons build pupils' confidence and help equip them with the necessary skills to study.
152. Identified low levels of literacy are addressed through an effective literacy programme in Y7. Pupils feel that the school gives them every chance to succeed.
153. The school monitors the performance of boys and girls. A clear equal opportunities policy is put into practice with both genders having equal access to all areas of the curriculum and other school activities. A boy and a girl on the school council represent each year group. Equal opportunities are also explicitly covered in PSE lessons.
154. Whilst the school has few pupils from ethnic minorities, issues of race and discrimination are discussed fully in both PSE and religious education. Pupils are sensitive to the issues raised. The school has coherent policies and strategies to deal with issues of racial harassment and there is a named member of staff with responsibility for this area.
155. The school tackles issues of inappropriate behaviour effectively. Pupils say that teachers take incidents of bullying seriously and deal quickly with them. Bullying is addressed in the PSE programme. If bullying occurs members of staff take appropriate action and keep systematic records. The alternative curriculum, OASIS and a PRU run by the UA provide good support for pupils who find it difficult to integrate.

156. The school does not have provision for pupils in wheelchairs though it has made the necessary adjustments for disabled pupils who have attended the school, such as the placing of additional handrails on the stairways. Disabled pupils are currently directed to another school in the area by the UA.
157. Pupils are acquainted through religious education with the range of cultures found in Britain and encouraged to appreciate and respect these. This is apparent in the way the school welcomes pupils from minority groups.

## **Leadership and management**

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

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

158. The school's judgement was split between grades two and three. The findings of the inspection team broadly match those of the school's own evaluation.

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

159. The school has clear aims that are familiar to governors, staff and pupils. These shared aims help the school to make improvements purposefully. The school is succeeding in its aim of raising pupils' achievements and expectations within an increasingly supportive environment. This is accomplished with the aid of good policies focused on pupils' needs which are understood and implemented by staff.
160. The headteacher and senior managers provide clear direction for the work of the school. The SMT sets clear expectations for middle managers. Although much middle management is effective there is some variability in the extent to which it improves the standards that pupils achieve and the quality of provision.
161. The school has good procedures for promoting equality of opportunity and meets statutory requirements in respect of disability and looked after children. The quality of provision offered attracts pupils with learning difficulties from a wide area.
162. The school takes account of the WAG priorities as set out in 'The Learning Country'. It provides very good transition experiences for pupils as they move from KS2 to KS3, in part through effective projects in a number of subjects. It has promoted the development of key skills across the curriculum, particularly literacy skills, successfully.
163. A particular strength of the school is its development of pupils' knowledge and understanding of sustainable development. Pupils understand ecological issues including the importance of recycling and using resources responsibly. The school is an 'Eco-School' and has recently achieved the Green Flag Gold Award for its work in this area.
164. The school has good links with other providers of education and employers. This enables it to provide suitable training opportunities for pupils and students, particularly those undertaking vocational courses. The school works in

partnership with a neighbouring school and a college of further education to broaden the curriculum offered to students in the sixth form. It seeks to extend this collaboration further.

165. The SMT sets and agrees departmental goals to raise standards of achievement and expects heads of departments and their teams to take appropriate actions to achieve them. Goals, based on analysis of previous attainments and benchmark data, are discussed and agreed with heads of departments. They are suitably challenging and realistic. The impact of this process varies between subjects and has been affected, in some cases, by staff changes.
166. The process of setting goals is well established. Progress made is monitored using a range of strategies, most of which are implemented by the SMT. Each member of the SMT is linked to specific departments and works closely with them. Strategies include observations of teaching, discussions and analysis of results and attendance at team meetings. Reviewing of progress by middle managers is inconsistent and, in some cases, insufficiently focused on raising achievement.
167. Procedures for monitoring the performance of staff are used to inform an effective programme of staff development. This programme is based on addressing the training needs identified through monitoring. Training, generally, is focused on improving teaching and learning. The quality of continuing professional development organised by the school has led to it maintaining its 'Investors In People' status.

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

168. Governors are very supportive of the school. They play an important part receiving and discussing documents such as the SDP and reports on pupils' attainment in external examinations. Governors have great confidence in the school's leaders and managers and trust them to work effectively. They endorse the strategic direction set by the headteacher. The finance sub-committee of the GB monitors spending effectively and efficiently.
169. Governors are kept well informed about the work of the school and the performance of pupils. They rarely, however, involve themselves closely with day-to-day routines and procedures and do not participate actively in procedures for monitoring the quality of provision. Nevertheless, governors make good use of the information they are provided with and contribute usefully to planning actions and making decisions.
170. In most respects governors fulfil their legal duties and responsibilities. They have not, however, ensured that statutory requirements regarding information to be included in the school prospectus and for a daily act of collective worship are fulfilled.

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

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

171. This grade matches the school's own self-evaluation. Whilst the school did not give precise grades for every key question, its overview of performance in each of the seven areas matches that of the inspection team.

**How effectively the provider's performance is monitored and evaluated**

172. Self-evaluation is a developing feature of the school. Whilst the systems established are generally comprehensive, and form a good basis for development, they are not yet operating to their potential.

173. The most embedded system is that of monitoring classroom practice and pupils' work, at both senior and middle management level. Monitoring is regular and focused on specific features of practice, though not critical enough in some subjects.

174. Compiling an annual self-evaluation report is a recent initiative. Whilst senior and middle managers have an overview of what is working well and what needs improvement, there is not enough rigour and clarity in identifying the good features and the shortcomings. Too often, self-evaluation is focused on provision, rather than standards, teaching and learning.

175. Results from the monitoring processes do not yet feed into the self-evaluation report, or, subsequently, into development planning, in a systematic way. However, managers are developing a good overview of how the processes will link.

176. The analysis of examination results is better at senior than at middle management level. The use of baseline assessment to set targets for individual pupils and students is very well developed. Analysis of performance at the end of KS3, KS4 and the sixth form usefully forms the basis of discussions between the headteacher and heads of department. However, this analysis is not yet making a significant impact on teaching styles and learning in all departments.

177. Data on attendance and on behaviour management are kept under regular review by senior and middle managers.

178. Pupils on the school council and students on the sixth form committee feel that their views are taken into account. These systems are well established. Significant changes to aspects of school provision have been made as a result.

179. Parents have had some input into the self-evaluation arrangements through questionnaires and this strategy is being extended.

180. Arrangements with other institutions, to extend provision 14-19 are regularly reviewed, especially the cost-effectiveness of provision in the sixth form. As yet, other providers do not systematically contribute to the school's self-evaluation procedures.

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

181. Appropriate areas for on-going improvement have been identified in the school development plan, which rightly focuses on pupils' achievement. Planning has become more precise since the last inspection, though costs are not detailed. The plan is, however, for one year only and does not form part of a longer-term plan.
182. Departmental development plans cover some of the aims of the school development plan as well as subject-specific issues. In general, departmental plans are not detailed enough to deliver whole-school aims, nor precise enough in terms of deadlines and projected costs.
183. Resource implications are included in both school and departmental plans. Not all development bids from departments have been granted because of limited capitation.
184. The setting of numerical targets for pupils and students is a strong feature of the school. Pupils and students are highly motivated to meet and surpass their targets.
185. There have been measurable improvements since the last inspection, particularly in examination results, in the culture of achievement and in the accommodation.
186. The school has acted on all the key issues from the last inspection. There has been particularly good progress in literacy, target-setting, inclusion and religious education for sixth formers. Attendance and the daily act of collective worship remain issues for action.
187. The working groups of staff on literacy and inclusion have made a significant impact on the improvements in these areas. The headteacher's leadership in target-setting has been instrumental in implementing this initiative across the school.
188. Regular evaluation of progress is, however, hampered by lack of formal review of the school development plan and departmental plans at regular intervals and annually. The school is planning to formalize its current informal review.

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

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

189. The school's judgement was split between grades two and three. The inspection team's judgement broadly matches that in the school's self-evaluation.

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

190. The staff as a whole is experienced, well qualified and has sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the curriculum. Staffing allows the curriculum to be

taught effectively to all pupils and students, and their needs are met well. If staff are absent then cover for their work is provided effectively.

191. For the most part the needs of pupils with SEN are met from within the Learning Support Unit. Teachers, well-qualified support assistants and/or technicians work together very effectively. Support is good with strong features. For example, support assistants often take an active part in lessons and help monitor and assess pupils' progress. There is good access to professional advice and expertise for these and other pupils and students.
192. There are enough administrative and other members of staff for the school to function effectively on a day-to-day basis. Nevertheless, pupils' access to the library and ICT facilities is sometimes limited, especially before and after school, partly because staff with other duties cannot be present in these rooms. Plans to minimise these difficulties are underway. Sixth form students generally have good access to computers and private study facilities.
193. The level of provision and the deployment of resources, including computers and electronic white boards, are good across most areas of the curriculum. Several subjects use ICT well to enhance pupils' and students' learning. A small minority of staff does not make consistent or planned use of ICT or other resources such as artefacts, video or display work in their teaching.
194. The condition of books used across the curriculum is generally good. However, not all pupils have access to these books at home and there is a tendency for teachers to use photocopied material rather than books. The library is a very pleasant place to work and students make good use of it. It is, however, a little under-resourced and used infrequently overall by pupils.
195. The school makes effective use of a good range of resources beyond the school. Pupils' and students' learning and achievement are enhanced by their use. Additionally the school makes full use of very good sports facilities in the leisure centre that shares the school site. The provision of resources addresses well a wide range of pupils' and students' needs.
196. The overall quality of accommodation is good and, in most respects, provides a stimulating learning environment for pupils and students. There are enough rooms for the pupils and students on roll and for the curriculum provided. The Learning Support Unit offers good accommodation and there are plans to improve it further.
197. Most rooms are pleasant places to work in and are enhanced by good quality displays. Specialist rooms are housed close to one another making sharing of resources and whole departmental discussion easier. Members of staff have their own teaching rooms. There are, nevertheless, a few classrooms that do not have blinds or adequate soundproofing and, this impairs the quality of learning and teaching.
198. All buildings and rooms are accessible to all pupils in the school. There are no lifts in the buildings but at present these are not required for anyone. The school buildings and grounds are used effectively and the site, including playing fields, is kept in good order.
199. The outside fabric of most buildings is in a satisfactory state of repair with very little graffiti in evidence. The interior of buildings is kept clean and several rooms and other areas are carpeted. The main entrance foyer is attractive and there are a few very

pleasant enclosed areas between buildings that are looked after by pupils from the Learning Support Unit. Although there are attractive displays in several corridors other areas of the interior such as stair-wells are variable in appearance and not well enhanced by display work or decoration. A few of the toilets are in need of repair and refurbishment.

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

200. The head teacher, in full discussion with the senior management team, bursar and chair of the financial sub committee of the GB, manages the budget effectively. The school has not had a deficit budget for many years and uses any contingency money wisely. The school is aware that the sixth form is expensive but considers it to be a vital facility for students and the wider community. It monitors and reviews well any effect the sixth form has on pupils' achievement and quality of learning in the rest of the school.
201. Systems to analyse and review the use of central resources are good on the whole and ensure value for money. Not all departmental development plans, however, are costed rigorously enough and some heads of department are not sufficiently familiar with the school's bidding process for extra funding.
202. The school knows the costs of major programmes being planned and those that are ongoing. Debate and decisions about spending are linked well to the school's objectives and prioritise the effect it will have upon individual pupils. Pupils generally have adequate learning resources to support their needs and provision is reviewed regularly.
203. The staff is deployed well so that expertise is put to best use. Most teachers evaluate their needs well and make them known to senior managers informally and through the school's performance management and review systems. Managers are aware of the strengths and areas for development of staff. There are effective procedures for professional updating.
204. Management consults well with other schools about its provision and the subsequent decisions it makes. For example, a decision about whether to use electronic registration is being reached on the basis of consultation with two local schools. Data produced by the UA about the spending of its schools is also referred to for comparison purposes.
205. The financial implications of, for example, staff development, deployment, the projected number of pupils and students on roll and subsequent room usage, are reviewed at appropriate times. External audits of the accounts have shown systems to be good. The accounting system allows the school to monitor and account well for its spending.
206. The school is balancing well the cost of provision against its effectiveness. Provision overall is helping pupils and students from a wide variety of academic and social backgrounds to reach their potential and is providing them with a good quality education appropriate to their needs.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### Subject 1 English

**KS3 Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**KS4 Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

#### Good features (KS3)

207. The standard of pupils' speaking skills is good. Pupils are able to make valid contributions, usually in standard English, on a broad range of topics. More able pupils use a good range of vocabulary. Most pupils listen attentively.
208. Attitudes to reading are generally good. Pupils improve their reading and research skills using texts such as Hinton's *Buddy* and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. They read with enthusiasm, some pupils demonstrating developed skills.
209. Most pupils write fluently with interest and enthusiasm achieving standards appropriate to their abilities. They redraft their work successfully in order to improve the standard.
210. Pupils with SEN make sound progress and develop their literacy skills well.

#### Shortcomings (KS3)

211. There are no important shortcomings. However, the reading of a small minority of pupils tends to be hesitant.

#### Good Features (KS4)

212. Pupils complete oral and written tasks successfully at levels appropriate to GCSE or Entry Level English. They contribute confidently to discussions in lessons.
213. Standards of reading are good. More able pupils read Shakespeare with good levels of expression and understanding.
214. Pupils' extended writing is good, often as a result of considered drafting and careful planning in their exercise books and folders.
215. Some pupils make good use of word processing using computers in order to enhance the standard of presentation of their written work.

#### Shortcomings (KS4)

216. There are no important shortcomings, however, the work of a small minority of pupils is incomplete and contains inaccurate spelling and punctuation.

## **The sixth form**

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

#### **Good features**

- 217. Students broaden their knowledge and understanding of literature. They tackle complex texts such as *King Lear* and produce perceptive written and oral work.
- 218. They write fluently using quotations effectively and their responses to tasks show understanding and insights.
- 219. Students show good levels of motivation. They participate actively in lessons and use appropriate terminology correctly.
- 220. The more able students demonstrate an ability to engage fully in critical debates. They display discrimination in their writing using an informed and analytical manner.

#### **Shortcomings**

- 221. There are no important shortcomings.

|                                |
|--------------------------------|
| <b>Subject 2 - Mathematics</b> |
|--------------------------------|

### **KS3 Grade 3: Good Features outweigh shortcomings**

### **KS4 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

#### **Good Features (KS3)**

- 222. Most pupils show good standards of work across all Attainment Targets of the National Curriculum. They use mathematical language accurately both in written and in oral work.
- 223. The great majority of pupils make good progress in current work. They complete set tasks in lessons and use mathematical techniques competently in tackling problems given to them.
- 224. Most pupils perform calculations mentally with confidence and speed. They also make use of estimates in a range of contexts.
- 225. Pupils with SEN display good standards across the Attainment Targets and demonstrate a willingness to explore and investigate pertinent activities in lessons. They extract information given in a graphical form and have a proficient understanding of negative numbers in simple contexts.

#### **Shortcomings (KS3)**

- 226. Recall of previous work is often insecure. This is evident for a large proportion of pupils of all abilities.

227. The significant minority of pupils use a taught technique with limited understanding and lack confidence to apply their knowledge in more unfamiliar contexts.

### **Good Features (KS4)**

228. Most pupils work hard in lessons. They have a good knowledge and understanding of current work and complete set tasks competently.
229. More able pupils display good standards in number, algebra and data handling. They show proficient use of mathematical reasoning and construct and interpret information presented in various graphical forms competently and accurately.
230. Lower ability pupils use numbers proficiently in a range of contexts. They use calculators appropriately and make sensible use of estimates.

### **Shortcomings (KS4)**

231. As in KS3 recall is often insecure. This is particularly evident for middle ability pupils where previous work is frequently recalled with confusion and inaccuracy.
232. A significant minority of pupils of all abilities are hesitant in performing calculations mentally.

## **The sixth form**

### **Grade 2 – Good features and no important shortcomings**

#### **Good Features**

233. The majority of students show good standards of work in statistics and pure mathematics.
234. Students are well motivated and show high levels of independence in their work. They engage well in oral work in lessons and demonstrate competent knowledge and understanding of underlying concepts in their written work.
235. In Y12 most students have a good grasp of basic probability facts and apply them appropriately to solve problems.
236. In Y13 students have a good knowledge and understanding of higher probability work and show confidence in solving related problems.

#### **Shortcomings**

237. There are no important shortcomings.
238. A small minority of students in Y12 use calculators for simple calculations with fractions where a mental or written strategy would be more appropriate.
239. Standards in basic algebra are variable for students in Y12. A small number of them make fundamental errors in manipulating expressions in algebra.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Subject 3 – Welsh second language</b> |
|--|

**KS3 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

**KS4 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

**Good features (KS3)**

- 240. Pupils work diligently in lessons and respond to a range of oral tasks. The majority understand the information contained on video and audio tapes and complete follow-up tasks correctly. Pupils interact well with each other using set language patterns in tasks in which they work in pairs.
- 241. The better readers convey meaning when reading class materials and their overall pronunciation is correct.
- 242. In written work the majority of pupils take care in the presentation of their work and use basic sentence structures correctly to convey personal information.

**Shortcomings (KS3)**

- 243. In oral work pupils lack confidence in using the target language in a wider context.
- 244. A small minority of pupils in most classes is hesitant when reading. These pupils do not always pronounce Welsh words correctly.
- 245. In writing tasks a small minority of pupils is uncertain of correct language patterns and misspell words.

**Good features (KS4)**

- 246. In oral work pupils respond to the target language and the more able pupils communicate with increasing confidence in pair work. They present information and express opinions on class topics.
- 247. The majority of pupils understand a selection of reading materials and respond to the contents. Pronunciation is good.
- 248. Pupils complete a good range of written work. The more able pupils compose extended passages of writing. They vary effectively the use of sentence patterns and the tenses of verbs.

**Shortcomings (KS4)**

- 249. In oral work pupils lack confidence to give extended responses to questions.
- 250. A small minority of pupils mispronounce words when reading.
- 251. A small number of pupils does not always use sentence structures correctly in writing tasks.

|   |
|---|
| <b>Subject 4 - Information technology</b> |
|---|

**KS3 Grade 3: Good feature outweigh shortcomings**

**KS4 Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**Good features (KS3)**

- 252. Most pupils have clear ideas of how they can use information technology to improve the quality of their work. They can also explain some of the social, economic, ethical and moral issues related to the use of information technology and the impact of it on peoples' lives.
- 253. Pupils use information technology equipment and software competently and confidently to achieve specific outcomes.
- 254. Most pupils successfully enhance and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills in a variety of worthwhile contexts and to solve challenging situations and problems. This includes modelling and the creation, maintenance and interrogation of databases.
- 255. Pupils use information technology successfully to process, present, share and exchange information, to promote creative work and enhance its presentation. Such work is produced accurately and often with a sense of the audience for which it is intended.

**Shortcomings (KS3)**

- 256. The most able pupils do not attain sufficiently at the higher levels of the NC, for instance in the testing of hypotheses, the design of more complex systems and the critical assessment of the validity of their ideas.

**Good Features (KS4)**

- 257. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of computer systems and the component parts and peripherals including the range of input devices for human interaction and data capture. Pupils are able to explain the range of information technology applications and the effects these have on society.
- 258. The majority of pupils can choose, use and design information and communication systems effectively to carry out a range of tasks and to solve problems at the appropriate level.
- 259. The more able pupils can evaluate critically a range of information systems, including their own, with an understanding of their capabilities and limitations.
- 260. Most pupils can gather, store, process and present information through activities in a range of contexts.
- 261. Pupils design and implement information technology systems for particular purposes and the more able pupils test and document these fully.

### **Shortcomings (KS4)**

262. There are no important shortcomings.

### **The sixth form**

#### **Grade 2: Good features with no important shortcomings**

##### **Good features**

263. Students have a good understanding about organisations and the design constraints and good practice that must apply in business contexts. Students are able to carefully tailor their writing styles and presentation to meet the requirements of the user. They have a very good understanding of the importance, application and potential of information technology in the world of business.
264. Students are able to produce appropriate solutions to problems employing sound design principles, planning fully to meet the brief. They test hypotheses and software fully. Projects are fully documented, taking full account of the users and their needs.

##### **Shortcomings**

265. There are no important shortcomings

|                            |
|----------------------------|
| <b>Subject 5 - History</b> |
|----------------------------|

**KS3 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

**KS4 Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

##### **Good features (KS3)**

266. Most pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of features, events and people in the past. Their recall of previous work is sound.
267. Most pupils of mid and high ability are able to give several reasons for events and categorise different types of causes. Some of the most able pupils can explain causes fully and justify why some are more significant than others.
268. Most mid and high ability pupils have a good understanding of evidential work; they extract information from visual and documentary sources effectively, make comparisons and discuss their provenance and reliability. Some organise and communicate historical knowledge gained through independent research or fieldwork well, visually and in writing.

### **Shortcomings (KS3)**

- 269. Some pupils of mid and high ability do not fully understand historical terms or reasons for various events. Some give limited explanations for differences or changes, and a significant amount of independently researched work in Year 8 lacks appropriate depth.
- 270. Pupils lack awareness of a range of interpretations of the past, so their ability to evaluate subsequent representations of historical events and people is limited.

### **Good features (KS4)**

- 271. All pupils, including those with SEN, make good progress in understanding historical terms and concepts and recall previous learning well.
- 272. In their work on Nazi Germany, pupils of mid and high ability are able to use knowledge of previous learning about the USA to broaden and deepen their understanding of the concept of prejudice and can explain in appropriate depth why some social and ethnic groups have been discriminated against in the past.
- 273. Most pupils of mid and high ability investigate historical questions effectively by describing, explaining and reaching conclusions based on the evidence they study. They recognise and explain multiple causes, select the most important and justify their choice. Some give comprehensive and well-structured written responses to source questions.

### **Shortcomings (KS4)**

- 274. There are no important shortcomings. However, pupils of mid and high ability do not always provide enough detail or use evidence from sources fully in their responses to historical questions so their analysis is sometimes limited.

## **The sixth form**

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

#### **Good features**

- 275. Students undertake good quality and comprehensive research into historical questions relating to different interpretations and perspectives on the history of Fascism. Most can select relevant points to share with others, give valid explanations and substantiate their judgements with reference to relevant examples.
- 276. The most able students in Year 12 are confident to ask relevant questions in class. They synthesise evidence well and assess aspects of history in detail, expressing their opinions clearly orally and in writing.

#### **Shortcomings**

277. There are no important shortcomings, however, in some aspects of oral and written work, students do not expand upon points in enough depth and detail and coursework sometimes lacks analysis or focus.

|                       |
|-----------------------|
| <b>Subject 6: Art</b> |
|-----------------------|

**KS3 Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

**KS4 Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

**Good features (KS3)**

278. Pupils analyse the work of other artists, craft workers and designers to explore ideas. For example, in Y7 pupils of all abilities discuss and evaluate a self-portrait by Peter Blake.
279. The Y9 design project, where pupils create their own design company, results in work that demonstrates a grasp of design process skills, in a range of media, for a variety of purposes.
280. Pupils talk about their work with confidence using art and design vocabulary and sketchbook work demonstrates pupils' ability to plan their ideas.
281. Lower ability pupils and those with SEN achieve well and pupils are well motivated and show respect for each other's work.

**Shortcomings (KS3)**

282. There are no important shortcomings. However, in many cases, pupils do not draw sufficiently upon contextual examples to enrich and inform technical aspects of their work.

**Good features (KS4)**

283. Design work is good and pupils work in a range of contexts to develop their design skills.
284. Sketchbooks are used to collect contextual information. Pupils are keen to experiment freely and attempt to develop their ideas with individuality.
285. Pupils discuss their work and use appropriate art and design vocabulary to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.
286. Many pupils are well-motivated and show respect for different sorts of art work by other artists.

**Shortcomings (KS4)**

287. Pupils explore a narrow range of contextual examples. Very little work is stimulated by multi-cultural starting points or contemporary practice.

288. Many pupils do not explore a variety of drawing approaches so that drawing skills are underdeveloped and in some cases this impacts upon the quality of the outcomes.
289. Sketchbooks are not fully utilised as tools for investigation for the development of ideas and to link contextual references to pupils' own work.

### **The sixth form**

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

##### **Good features**

290. Students work independently to draw together a range of references with which to enrich their personal studies.
291. Students in Y12 are experimenting with the work of other artists in their project on the Cubist artists and are already showing increased control of media and the ability to extend their drawing skills.
292. Students in Y13 speak with confidence and maturity about their work and about art and design concepts.
293. There is some very good investigative and experimental development of ideas and processes in Y13 sketchbooks and accompanying exploratory work.

##### **Shortcomings:**

294. There are no important shortcomings. However, in a minority of cases there are some examples of weak drawing skills evident in the Year 12 sketchbooks.

## School's response to the inspection

295. We are pleased that the inspectors recognise that improvements are being made in the raising of pupils' standards of achievement within a caring and supportive environment. The inspection report makes it clear that the school is balancing well the cost of provision against its effectiveness. The inspectors comment that we are helping pupils and students from a variety of academic and social backgrounds to reach their potential, and that we provide them with a good quality education appropriate to their needs.
296. The targets set by the Welsh Assembly Government were exceeded both in relation to teaching and standards achieved in the lessons inspected. The inspection report recognises that the school has made good progress in addressing the key issues from the last inspection, particularly good progress being made in literacy, target setting, inclusion, and religious education in the sixth form; we are also making good progress in tackling the objectives identified in the school development plan.
297. An action plan will be put in place to address the recommendations of the report; the majority of these are recognised by the inspection team as already identified in the school development plan. The continued improvement in national curriculum and examination results will remain a key priority for the school. We will further develop our strategies to improve attendance, and we are pleased to report that attendance this year has stayed above 90%. Governors and middle managers welcome their increased role in monitoring, self-evaluation, and development planning.
298. Whenever funds allow we will continue to improve both the accommodation and resources available. Steps will be put in place to widen the access to the library and ICT facilities. Governors will review the requirement for a daily act of collective worship, and will ensure that the prospectus is revised before the end of this academic year. We are pleased that the inspectors identified many strengths and good procedures in the school that will enable us to effectively address the recommendations.

## Appendix A

### Basic information about the school

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Name of school      | Nantyglo Comprehensive School          |
| School type         | Community                              |
| Age-range of pupils | 11 – 18                                |
| Address of school   | Pond Road<br>Nantyglo<br>Blaenau Gwent |
| Post-code           | NP23 4WX                               |
| Telephone number    | 01495 310776                           |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Headteacher                                  | Mr W F Hinwood                                   |
| Date of appointment                          | February 1997                                    |
| Chair of governors/<br>Appropriate authority | Mr S Anthony                                     |
| Reporting inspector                          | Mr P G Carter                                    |
| Dates of inspection                          | 8 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> November 2004 |

## Appendix B

### School data and indicators

| Year group       | Y 7 | Y 8 | Y 9 | Y 10 | Y 11 | Y 12 | Y13 | Total |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|-----|-------|
| Number of pupils | 104 | 113 | 113 | 93   | 112  | 34   | 29  | 593   |

| Total number of teachers |           |           |                            |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|
|                          | Full-time | Part-time | Full-time equivalent (fte) |
| Number of teachers       | 39        | 1         | 39.3                       |

| Staffing information                                   |       |
|--|-------|
| Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes) | 14.94 |
| Average teaching group size                            | 18.7  |
| Overall contact ratio (percentage)                     | 79.9  |

| Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |              |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------------|
|  | Y7   | Y8   | Y9   | Y10  | Y11  | Y12  | Y13  | Whole School |
| Term 1   | 87.7 | 82.7 | 89.0 | 87.1 | 86.5 | 93.7 | 87.5 | 89.1         |
| Term 2   | 90.4 | 90.5 | 87.0 | 84.7 | 87.1 | 88.1 | 86.8 | 88.0         |
| Term 3   | 89.5 | 91.5 | 81.6 | 83.2 | 90.1 | 82.1 | 93.6 | 85.0         |

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals             | 33 |
| Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection | 2  |

## Appendix C

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

| Percentage of pupils at each level |                    |          |   |      |   |   |     |     |      |      |      |      |      |   |    |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|----------|---|------|---|---|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|------|---|----|
|                                    |                    |          | D | A    | F | W | 1   | 2   | 3    | 4    | 5    | 6    | 7    | 8 | EP |
| English                            | Teacher assessment | School   | - | 1.8  | - | - | 1.8 | 4.8 | 18.7 | 40.1 | 15.2 | 13.4 | 4.5  | - | -  |
|                                    |                    | National | - | 1    | 1 | - | -   | 2   | 9    | 22   | 33   | 22   | 9    | - | -  |
|                                    | Test               | School   | - | 9.8  | - | - | -   | -   | 3.6  | 26.8 | 25.9 | 20.5 | 2.7  | - | -  |
|                                    |                    | National | - | 3    | 2 | - | -   | -   | 9    | 21   | 31   | 23   | 10   | - | -  |
| Mathematics                        | Teacher assessment | School   | - | 0.9  | - | - | -   | 3.6 | 16.1 | 22.3 | 31.2 | 21.4 | 4.5  | - | -  |
|                                    |                    | National | - | 1    | - | - | -   | 1   | 8    | 20   | 25   | 29   | 14   | - | -  |
|                                    | Test               | School   | - | 6.3  | - | - | -   | -   | 3.5  | 22.3 | 21.4 | 30.4 | 8.9  | - | -  |
|                                    |                    | National | - | 5    | 1 | - | -   | -   | 7    | 19   | 21   | 32   | 14   | - | -  |
| Science                            | Teacher assessment | School   | - | 0.9  | - | - | 1.8 | 3.5 | 5.4  | 15.2 | 42.0 | 19.6 | 11.6 | - | -  |
|                                    |                    | National | - | 1    | - | - | -   | 1   | 8    | 21   | 32   | 25   | 11   | - | -  |
|                                    | Test               | School   | - | 11.6 | - | - | -   | -   | 3.5  | 17.0 | 28.6 | 21.4 | 13.4 | - | -  |
|                                    |                    | National | - | 4    | 1 | - | -   | -   | 6    | 19   | 31   | 25   | 14   | - | -  |

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

| Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language) |    |               |    |
|--|----|---------------|----|
| by Teacher Assessment  |    | by Test       |    |
| In the school  | 54 | In the school | 54 |
| In Wales   | 54 | In Wales      | 54 |

**Public Examination Results:**

| <b>For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ</b> |     |
|---|-----|
| Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2003                         | 106 |
| Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil   | 29  |

| <b>The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2003:</b>  | School | UA | Wales |
|---|--------|----|-------|
| entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent   | 71     | 86 | 87    |
| attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both              | 38     | 43 | 51    |
| attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both              | 71     | 83 | 85    |
| attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator) | 31     | 30 | 38    |
| entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE   | 93     | 99 | 97    |
| attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent  | 54     | 70 | 74    |
| attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G C or the vocational qualification equivalent                                      | 81     | 93 | 93    |
| attained no graded GCSE C or the vocational qualification equivalent  | 19     | 7  | 7     |
| attained one or more Entry level qualification only   | 10     | 4  | 3     |
| attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1   | -      | -  | -     |
| attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2   | -      | -  | -     |

| <b>For pupils aged 16, 17 and 18, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs</b>                 |    |
|---|----|
| Number of pupils aged 16, 17 and 18 in January 2003                                   | 28 |
| Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2003 | 18 |
| Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2003          | 10 |

|   | School | UA | Wales |
|---|--------|----|-------|
| Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C      | 56     | 50 | 58    |
| Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E      | 100    | 89 | 94    |
| Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects      | 18     | 16 | 20    |
| Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ at level 2 | -      | -  | -     |
| Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Advanced or NVQ at level 3     | -      | -  | -     |

## Appendix D

### Evidence base of the inspection

Fifteen inspectors spent a total of 43 days at the school and met as a team before the inspection.

These inspectors visited:

- eighty four lessons or parts of lessons; and
- a cross section of registration or tutorial periods, acts of collective worship and extra-curricular activities.

Members of the team had meetings with:

- the senior management team, governing body, parents and staff before the inspection began;
- members of the senior management team and a wide range of teachers, support and administrative staff; and
- groups of pupils and students representing each age group.

The team also considered:

- a selection of pupils' and students' work, ensuring an appropriate range in terms of age and ability;
- comprehensive documentation provided by the school both before and during the inspection;
- responses to a parents' questionnaire; and
- comments from a wide range of pupils and students about the school.

## Appendix E

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

| Team member            | Responsibilities               |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Peter Carter           | Registered Inspector, KQ1, KQ5 |
| Glynis Owen            | KQ6, 6 <sup>th</sup> Form      |
| Alan Cooke             | KQ7                            |
| Paul Thomas            | KQ2                            |
| Jeff Hanney            | KQ3                            |
| Martin Rawle           | KQ4                            |
| Charles Harris         | English                        |
| David Williams         | Mathematics                    |
| Clive Rowlands         | Welsh second language          |
| Michael Pickin         | Information technology         |
| Sian Rhiannon Williams | History                        |
| Sarah Lewis            | Art                            |
| Rhiannon Boardman      | Lay Inspector                  |
| Gwyn Griffiths         | Special Educational Needs      |
| Michael Allen          | School nominee                 |

### Acknowledgement

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, staff, pupils and students of Nantyglo Comprehensive School for their hospitality and cooperation throughout the inspection.

### Contractor

Celtic Inspection Services Unit  
UWIC  
Cyncoed Campus  
Cyncoed Road  
Cyncoed  
Cardiff  
CF23 6XD

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

**NANTYGLO COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL  
POND ROAD  
NANTYGLO  
BRYNMAWR  
BLAENAU GWENT  
NP23 4WX**

**A SUMMARY REPORT FOR PARENTS**

**Date of Inspection: 8<sup>TH</sup> – 12<sup>TH</sup> November 2004**

**by**

**Mr P Carter**

**Inspector number: W262/16926**

**Date: 13<sup>th</sup> January 2005**

**Under Estyn contract number: T/13/04**

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Nantyglo Comprehensive School was inspected as part of a national programme of school inspection. The purpose is to identify good features and shortcomings in schools in order that they may improve the quality of education offered and raise the standards achieved by their pupils. The inspection of all schools within a six-year cycle is also designed to give parents more information about their child's school. A copy of this summary is sent to every family with a child at the school. The full report can be obtained from the school.

The inspection of Nantyglo Comprehensive School took place between 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> November 2004. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr Peter Carter undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

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

The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving this report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Nantyglo is an 11 – 18 mixed community school serving the areas of Nantyglo and Blaina in the Blaenau Gwent Unitary Authority (UA). There are 593 pupils on roll including 63 in the sixth form. The numbers of male and female pupils are approximately equal.
2. The areas served by the school are economically and socially disadvantaged. Thirty- three per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, a figure well above the national average of 15.7%. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language.
3. Forty-two pupils have statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN), the great majority of which relate to Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) and, to a lesser but increasing extent, to Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD). Low levels of literacy have been identified by the school with over 50% of pupils entering Y7 with reading ages well below their actual ages. Provision for pupils with SEN is fully integrated.
4. The senior management team (SMT) consists of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and two assistant head teachers. All have been in post since before the last inspection.

### The school's priorities and targets

5. The school has clear aims to raise pupils' achievements and expectations, promote the professional development of members of staff and maintain the quality of the accommodation. Priorities related to the raising of pupils' achievements are addressed through development plans for:
  - general issues;
  - improving achievement,
  - improving teaching,
  - continuing Performance Management,
  - developing the work of subject departments and teams,
  - monitoring lessons,
  - celebrating pupils' successes,
  - the use of targets to support pupils' learning,
  - improving attendance,
  - improving pupils' key skills,
  - curriculum development, and
  - monitoring performance.
6. The school's Self Evaluation Report (SER) is organised into eight sections. The first seven address each of the key questions of the Common Inspection Framework (CIF) in turn and the final section deals with progress made since the last

inspection. Graded judgements have been made for each of the seven key questions together with lists of evidence on which the judgements have been based. In four of the questions (one, two, five and seven) a split grade (two / three) has been awarded. Specific points within each section are not linked explicitly to evidence.

## Summary

7. Nantyglo Comprehensive School is an improving school. It has made good progress in addressing the key issues from the last inspection. It is making good progress in tackling the objectives identified in the school development plan. Particular improvements include the raising of pupils' standards of achievements within a caring and supportive environment. There is, however, some inconsistency in the rate of improvement across the curriculum and in the rigour with which progress is monitored and reviewed.

### Summary of grades

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

### KS3 and KS4

#### Standards of achievement

#### Standards achieved in the six subjects inspected

| SUBJECT                | KS3 | KS4 |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| English                | 2   | 2   |
| Mathematics            | 3   | 3   |
| Welsh second language  | 3   | 3   |
| Information Technology | 3   | 2   |
| History                | 3   | 2   |
| Art                    | 2   | 3   |

8. There are good features and no important shortcomings in English at both stages, information technology and history at key stage (KS)4 and art at KS3.
9. Good features outweigh shortcomings in Welsh second language and mathematics at both key stages, in information technology and history at KS3 and in art at KS4.

10. Members of the inspection team inspected the standards that pupils achieve in six subjects. The following table shows the standards achieved overall in these subjects at KS3 and KS4.

| <b>GRADE</b>                                | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>PERCENTAGES IN THE LESSONS INSPECTED</b> | 6.3      | 47.9     | 43.8     | 2.1      | 0        |

11. There are no important shortcomings in the standards pupils achieve in over half the classes inspected. In almost all of the other classes inspected the good features outweighed some shortcomings. There are important shortcomings in only a very small minority of classes. These figures are above the current national targets of 50% grades one or two and 95% grade three or above
12. Pupils with SEN make good progress and generally achieve good standards in relation to their abilities.
13. At all stages the great majority of pupils achieve good standards in key skills. Their communication skills are generally good. Speaking and listening skills are slightly better than those in reading and writing but good progress is being made in this area as a result of recent initiatives. Most pupils can use ICT effectively to support their learning. Numeracy skills, although satisfactory overall, are less well developed than other key skills.
14. In recent years, pupils' attainment in KS3 assessments in English, mathematics and science has, in most cases, been slightly higher than that of pupils in similar schools in Wales. Although there is some variation year on year, the overall trend is upward. The most recent results are the best to date. Results in science have been consistently higher than those in the other two core subjects.
15. Performance in GCSE examinations has improved during recent years. Although the rate of improvement has varied, the overall trend is upward. Significant progress has been made in the numbers of pupils attaining five or more grades A\* to C, and in the numbers attaining grade C or above in all three core subjects.
16. Overall, the performance of pupils in GCSE examinations is close to the average for schools in Wales with a similar intake. Although girls' attainment is higher than boys' the gap between them has narrowed in recent years. The unsatisfactory attendance of a small but significant minority of pupils has limited their attainment.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

17. Standards achieved in personal, social and learning skills are mostly good. However, although pupils make good progress developing their knowledge of the culture of Wales they seldom use the Welsh language except in Welsh lessons. Their bilingual competence is therefore not developed enough.
18. A well organised PSE programme and good quality assemblies help promote pupils' spiritual, social moral and cultural development. All pupils, however, do not receive their entitlement to a daily act of collective worship. The school has recently won the Green Flag gold award and, as a consequence of activities related to this, pupils have a sound understanding of sustainable development and ecological issues.

## The quality of education and training

19. The following table shows the quality of teaching at KS3 and KS4 in the six subjects inspected.

| <b>GRADE</b>                               | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>PERCENTAGE IN THE LESSONS INSPECTED</b> | 10.4     | 45.8     | 39.6     | 4.2      | 0        |

20. The school has exceeded the targets set by The Welsh Assembly Government that teaching should be at least good in 50% of classes and at least satisfactory in 95% of classes.
21. In almost all lessons observed good features outweighed shortcomings. However, in a few cases there is some lack of variety in learning and teaching approaches and infrequent use of stimulating materials.
22. Lessons are planned well and structured and in almost all of them pupils are made aware of projected learning outcomes. There are good relationships between staff and pupils leading to good rapport in lessons. Pupils are treated fairly and expected to behave appropriately.
23. Assessment is organised well and the school makes good use of target setting for individual pupils and carefully monitors their performance.
24. There is a very good range of learning and teaching styles within and across subject areas. This includes a good balance between theory and practice.
25. In most respects, learning experiences meet statutory requirements as well as the needs of learners. Pupils generally make good progress between years and key stages. An appropriate range of subjects is offered leading to suitable levels of accreditation.
26. The curriculum enables pupils to develop key skills and the school has recently been awarded the Quality Mark of the Basic Skills Agency for its work in this area. A range of strategies has helped pupils develop their communication skills. However, the use of information and communications technology (ICT) in learning and teaching is inconsistent across the curriculum. The monitoring of pupils' ICT and numeracy skills is insufficiently coordinated at KS3.
27. Very good links with primary schools enable pupils' transition from KS2 to KS3 to take place smoothly and effectively. Relationships with parents are good. Parents are provided with helpful information about the work of the school and the progress pupils make. Good links exist between the school and colleges of further and higher education as well as with businesses and other employers in the community.
28. Pupils are cared for well and receive good quality support and guidance. Weekly bulletins alert members of staff to policy updates and current issues. Pupils receive good careers guidance. The school council gives pupils a voice and their views are taken into account by teachers. Heads of Year play important and effective roles in the provision of pastoral care.

29. Good strategies are used to monitor and improve attendance and punctuality and have led to recent improvements. Attendance, however, remains unsatisfactory.
30. Pupils with SEN are supported well through the range of learning experiences provided for them. They make good progress.
31. The school uses effective measures to tackle bullying and inappropriate behaviour. A comprehensive PSE programme ensures that pupils cover issues of racial discrimination and equal opportunities effectively.
32. Appropriate health and safety and child protection arrangements are known and understood by teachers and used to help provide a safe, secure and caring environment. Pupils are confident that concerns about issues such as bullying will be dealt with quickly and sensitively when they are reported.

### **Leadership and management**

33. The school has clear aims which are known, understood and shared by governors and staff. These aims underpin and are reflected in the work of the school.
34. Leadership is effective in providing clear direction. The head teacher and SMT have initiated suitable procedures to facilitate effective middle management. Whilst middle management is successful in the provision of pastoral support it is more variable in the provision of academic support in all subject departments and teams.
35. Governors are very supportive of the work of the school. They play an important role in financial management and in overseeing development planning. However, they are not involved closely enough in the school's day-to-day operations such as monitoring and evaluation procedures.
36. Self-evaluation is a developing aspect of the school. The systems which have been established are generally comprehensive but are not yet operating to their potential.
37. Monitoring of classroom practice and pupils' work is well established. However, there is some lack of clarity in identifying good features and shortcomings.
38. Development planning, and particularly, the setting of targets for individual pupils, has brought about measurable improvements since the last inspection. Departmental development plans, however, are not detailed enough. Progress made towards targets set in these plans is not reviewed rigorously and consistently.
39. The staff as a whole is experienced, well qualified and has sufficient knowledge and expertise to teach all aspects of the curriculum. The deployment and quality of the support provided for pupils with SEN is good and sometimes very good.
40. Resources are generally deployed effectively and efficiently to achieve value for money. Nevertheless, pupils' use of text books to support their homework, and their access to the library and ICT facilities are limited.
41. The overall quality of accommodation is good and, in most respects provides a stimulating learning environment for pupils and students. However, some

classrooms do not have blinds or adequate sound proofing. In these classes pupils and teachers can have difficulty in ensuring good quality learning.

42. The school is balancing well the cost of provision against its effectiveness. Provision overall is helping pupils and students from a variety of academic and social backgrounds to reach their potential and is providing them with a good quality education appropriate to their needs.

## **The sixth form**

### **Standards of achievement**

#### **Standards achieved in the subjects inspected**

| <b>SUBJECT</b>         | <b>GRADE</b> |
|------------------------|--------------|
| English                | 2            |
| Mathematics            | 2            |
| Information technology | 2            |
| History                | 2            |
| Art                    | 2            |

43. In the sixth form the standards achieved by students show good features and no important shortcomings in all subjects and classes. No students were undertaking courses in Welsh second language in the school at the time of the inspection.
44. Members of the inspection team inspected the standards that students achieve in the above subjects. The following table shows the standards achieved in the sixth form overall in these subjects. These statistics, however, are based on a very small sample of lessons.

| <b>GRADE</b>                               | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>PERCENTAGE IN THE LESSONS INSPECTED</b> | 11.1     | 77.8     | 11.1     | 0        | 0        |

45. Grades attained at Advanced level have been improving steadily in the last few years and the most recent results are close to national averages. The numbers of students who choose to continue their education into the sixth form has been gradually increasing, as have the numbers going on to further and higher education.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students**

46. Students develop personal and social skills and the ability to work independently. They have good interpersonal skills and can speak with confidence about their work and aspirations. They make good progress in their spiritual and moral development, showing awareness of important issues and a willingness to become involved in fund-raising work for charities.

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

47. In all of the subjects inspected teaching was good with no important shortcomings. The following table shows the quality of teaching in the subjects inspected.

| <b>GRADE</b>                               | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>5</b> |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>PERCENTAGE IN THE LESSONS INSPECTED</b> | 0        | 88.9     | 11.1     | 0        | 0        |

48. Teachers ensure that students are clear about the progress they are making. Students know their current, predicted and potential grades and understand what they need to do in order to improve. Monitoring of their progress is carried out rigorously by teachers.
49. An enrichment curriculum has been introduced recently in the sixth form and is making a positive contribution to the development of students' personal, social and learning skills. The school has entered into partnership arrangements with neighbouring institutions to broaden the range of subjects offered to students.
50. Good transition arrangements are used well to ease students' induction into the sixth form. The sixth form committee enables students to participate in the management of the sixth form. Students are provided with good advice and support about careers and applying for courses in further and higher education institutions.

### **Leadership and management**

51. The leadership and management of the sixth form is closely linked and in harmony with those of the whole school. They are effective in the promotion of high standards through the setting and monitoring of students' academic targets.
52. Monitoring, self-evaluation and development planning in the sixth form are integrated into whole-school procedures. Systems for monitoring students' progress are good and communication within the sixth form is very good. Self-evaluations take students' views, expressed informally or through the sixth form committee, into account.
53. There is good access to computers and private study facilities for students in the sixth form.

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

54. Eight key issues for action were identified in the last inspection report. They focused on:
  - I. Raising standards in key skills.
  - II. Raising standards of achievement in Welsh at KS3, GNVQ Manufacturing at KS4 and in other subjects where shortcomings were identified in the report, particularly underperformance by boys.
  - III. Improving the quality of teaching.
  - IV. Developing strategies to improve attendance.
  - V. Improving arrangements for assessment, recording and reporting.
  - VI. Inclusion of pupils from the Learning Support Unit into the whole school.
  - VII. Pupils' spiritual development, religious education in the sixth form and provision for a daily act of collective worship.
  - VIII. School development planning.

55. The school has acted on all the key issues and has made particularly good progress in literacy, target setting, inclusion and religious education in the sixth form.
- I. Good progress has been made in raising standards in key skills, particularly pupils' literacy skills.
  - II. Standards of achievement in Welsh second language at KS3 have improved significantly. The GNVQ Manufacturing course has been removed from the KS4 curriculum. There has been a general improvement in standards achieved in almost all subjects. The proportion of classes where standards are good or better is considerably higher than in the last inspection. The difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls has been much reduced.
  - III. There have been important improvements in the quality of teaching and the range of teaching strategies used. The teaching in many more lessons at all stages and across the curriculum is judged to be good or better.
  - IV. Good use has been made of strategies to improve attendance resulting in steady, year on year improvement in the rate of attendance.
  - V. Very good progress has been made in eliminating inconsistencies in assessment, recording and reporting with especially good use made of target-setting procedures with individual pupils.
  - VI. Pupils with SEN are now successfully integrated and included. Good practice is shared effectively between staff in the Learning Support Unit and subject departments.
  - VII. Provision for pupils' and students' spiritual development, particularly assemblies and lessons in religious education and some other subjects, is much improved. Although good attempts have been made to devise effective and workable procedures, all pupils do not receive their entitlement to a daily act of collective worship. Students in the sixth form have a suitable timetable allocation for religious education.
  - VIII. Improvements have been made to the overall quality of school development planning. Senior managers monitor standards and provision within and across departments. The SDP is, however, for one year only and does not form part of a longer-term plan.

## **Recommendations**

In order to build upon the progress already being made the school should:

1. continue to improve national curriculum (NC) and external examination results and address the shortcomings in subjects identified in this report;\*
2. continue to improve attendance by developing further the strategies already in place;\*
3. increase the role of governors and middle managers in monitoring, evaluation and development planning and promote rigour, detail and consistency;\*
4. continue to widen access to and extend the use of text books, the library and ICT facilities;
5. continue to improve the accommodation and resources as funds become available;\* and
6. meet statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship and in respect of the information provided in the school's prospectus.

\*These recommendations are addressed in whole or in part in the current SDP.

## **Acknowledgement**

The inspection team would like to thank the governors, staff, pupils and students of Nantyglo Comprehensive School for their hospitality and cooperation throughout the inspection.

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