

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

**PRESTATYN HIGH SCHOOL  
2 PRINCES AVENUE  
PRESTATYN  
DENBIGHSHIRE  
LL19 8RS**

**School Number: 663/4014**

**Date of Inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> October 2004**

**by**

**Mr T O'Marah  
17193**

**Date: 6<sup>th</sup> December 2004**

**Under Estyn contract number: T/2/04**

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Prestatyn High 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 Prestatyn High School took place between 4<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> October 2004. An independent team of inspectors, led by Mr T O'Marah 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

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The national curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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## Context

### The nature of the school

1. Prestatyn High School is an authority maintained, English medium 11-18 mixed comprehensive school. In January 2004 there were 1721 pupils on roll, compared with 1463 pupils at the time of the previous inspection in January 1998. There were 278 sixth formers on roll in January 2004 compared with 232 in 1998.
2. The school continues to be oversubscribed and has admitted above its standard admission numbers in all of the last six years.
3. Pupils are from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds with around a quarter from relatively prosperous areas and a similar proportion from economically disadvantaged areas. Nearly 16% of pupils at Key Stages 3 and 4 are entitled to free school meals. Very few pupils come from homes where Welsh is the predominant language. Fewer than 2% of pupils come from minority ethnic groups.
4. Pupils come from the whole ability range. In 2003/4 the school's register of Special Educational Needs contained 265 pupils (15.4% of the school population). 53 pupils had statements of SEN (3.1%). The percentage of pupils on the SEN register has increased since the last inspection whilst the percentage with statements has decreased slightly.
5. Accommodation is at a premium with eight mobile classrooms having been added since the last inspection to meet the demand for places. Accommodation is generally good but heavily used.
6. The school has received a number of awards for the work it does. These include the Investors in People award in 2003, the Green Flag to celebrate Prestatyn as one of the few secondary schools in Wales to be recognised as an Eco school, and three curriculum awards from the Welsh Secondary Schools Association (WSSA) for the work on: transition from primary schools, multicultural education and SPY (Sixth formers Protecting You, the anti-bullying group).

### The school's priorities and targets

7. Prestatyn High school's mission statement continues to commit itself to being a community with high standards, promoting equality of opportunity and inclusion for all in the pursuit of excellence. It believes that every pupil should be entered for GCSE examinations and it strives to enable as many pupils as possible to return to the sixth form through the wide variety of courses offered. It prides itself on its caring environment and the structures it has created to promote this. It has set suitably challenging, specific and numeric targets to raise further the

standards of achievement of all pupils and departments and expects to further such progress in the future.

## Summary

### Table of grades awarded

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

### Standards

Standards in subjects inspected			
Subject	KS3	KS4	Sixth form
Mathematics	2	3	2
Science	2	2	2
Design and technology	2	2	2
Information technology	2	1	1
Physical education	3	2	2
Vocational education	-	2	2

8. Standards were inspected in the six subjects in the above table. In information technology standards are good and in KS4 there are outstanding features. In design technology, science and vocational subjects standards are good with no important shortcomings. There are some shortcomings in KS4 in mathematics and KS3 in physical education.
9. In the sixth form standards are good in all six subjects.
10. The following table shows the standards that pupils and students achieved in the six subjects inspected. 140 lessons were observed. The school exceeds the targets set by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) for standards of achievement.

	% grade 1	% grade 2	% grade 3	% grade 4	% grade 5
KS3	0	55	40	5	0
KS4	15	55	28	2	0
Sixth form	13	79	8	0	0
Whole school	9	61	27	3	0

(For an explanation of these grades, please refer to the beginning of the report)

11. At KS3 there has been a steady improvement in National Curriculum (NC) test results over the last 6 years. For 2004, for pupils achieving level 5 and above, school results are just above the averages for Wales and the Unitary Authority (UA) in English, mathematics and for the core subject indicator (CSI). Science was significantly above the Wales and UA averages.
12. At KS4, the proportion of pupils gaining five or more General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) grades A\*-C has closely matched the Wales average over recent years; in 2004 the results for the school were just above the average for Wales and the UA. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more grades A\*-G consistently exceeds the Wales and UA averages. The proportion of pupils gaining A\*-C grades in the CSI is the same as the national average. In the core subjects in 2004, higher grade pass rates in English and mathematics were just below the Wales average and science was significantly above it.
13. In the sixth form, the average points score for students taking two or more Advanced Level (A level) examinations has gradually improved over the past 6 years, and for 2004 was one point above the Wales average and equal to the UA average. The proportion of candidates achieving A-C grades is just below the Wales and UA averages but equals the national average for A-E grades.
14. Performance in NC tests and public examinations in KS3, KS4 and in the sixth form has improved since the previous inspection.
15. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress and achieve well, many being successful in GCSE examinations.
16. There is good provision for key skills throughout the school. Standards in communication, information and communications technology and numeracy are generally good, as are the wider skills of problem solving and working with others.

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

17. The following table shows the quality of teaching observed during the inspection. 191 lessons were observed.

	% grade 1	% grade 2	% grade 3	% grade 4	% grade 5
KS3	8	56	30	6	0
KS4	15	55	28	2	0
Sixth form	14	77	9	0	0
Whole school	12	60	25	3	0

(For an explanation of these grades, please refer to the beginning of the report)

18. Both the proportion of teaching which has no important shortcomings, and the proportion which has outstanding features have improved since the previous inspection. Overall, the school exceeds the WAG targets for the quality of teaching. However the quality of teaching is less good in KS3 than elsewhere in the school, and here, at 6%, it fails to reach the WAG target that no more than 5% of lessons should have important shortcomings.
19. There are no important shortcomings in 64% of lessons in KS3, rising to 70% in KS4. There are outstanding features in 8% of lessons in KS3 and 15% in KS4.
20. Of the six inspected subjects the teaching of information technology is good with outstanding features in KS4. Teaching in design and technology and vocational subjects is good. There are some shortcomings in science and mathematics in KS3 and KS4 and in physical education in KS3.
21. In the sixth form 14% of lessons observed had outstanding features; teaching in information technology, mathematics and science is particularly good with outstanding features. No lessons had important shortcomings.
22. In the six inspected subjects assessment is good other than in KS3 and KS4 mathematics where there are some shortcomings. There are outstanding features in information technology.
23. Assessment in the sixth form is always good with mathematics and information technology having outstanding features.
24. The curriculum overall meets the needs of all pupils and reflects the aims set out for pupils of statutory school age in the Education Act 1996. It is accessible for all pupils including those with special educational needs. Pupils have opportunities to gain an appropriate range of GCSE and vocational qualifications. Access to the sixth form is open to all students; they have opportunities to gain qualifications at A, AS and vocational courses in addition to key skill awards.
25. Although the Cwricwlwm Cymreig features in pupils' work in many subjects and schemes of work, there is no school policy for its promotion.
26. The school plans and manages its care arrangements very effectively. Pupils and students are very well supported by a range of teachers and others. Careers education and guidance, and work related education is good.

27. The standard of behaviour of the vast majority of the pupils is good, with pupils being aware of the high standards expected of them. Overall attendance for 2003/2004 was satisfactory.

### **Leadership and management**

28. The school has clear and appropriate aims that focus on equality of opportunity, the pursuit of excellence and providing a caring environment. These give direction to the work of the school and inform decision making by governors and management. Overall the school is successfully achieving all its aims and is particularly successful in those related to equality of opportunity, inclusion and care.
29. The head and senior managers give the school effective and clear leadership. In 2004 the school met or exceeded performance targets agreed with the UA. Most targets were appropriate and challenging given past performance.
30. The Governing Body is both effective and supportive with the individual Governors having a wide range of expertise and ability. Governors understand their roles within the school and are involved in strategic planning within the school.
31. Overall the school's self-evaluation report is an accurate analysis of its strengths and weaknesses. The report identifies good features, shortcomings and the action being taken. Overall the school's judgements match those of the inspection team.
32. The school is well staffed. Teachers are appropriately well qualified and there is an effective balance between experienced teachers and those new to the profession. A sufficient range of support staff enable the school to run smoothly.
33. Whilst there is an adequate supply of textbooks and equipment for subjects throughout the school, there are some shortages. Information technology is well resourced.
34. Overall the accommodation is sufficient for the number of pupils currently on roll. It meets the academic and pastoral needs of the curriculum; accommodation for the number of students in the sixth form is limited. Accommodation and facilities for physical education are insufficient in a school of this size.

### **Recommendations**

35. In order to improve further, the school needs to:
1. Improve the standards of achievement in those subjects where there are identified shortcomings in teaching and achievement.
  2. Improve the standards of achievement in mathematics in KS4.

3. Continue to develop the sharing of targets and progress with individual pupils and students so as to encourage improved achievement.
  4. Develop the organisation and integration of numeracy across the curriculum.
  5. Continue to develop self-evaluation and its role in informing planning for teaching at subject level.
  6. Continue to develop the Welsh ethos across the school.
36. The governing body is responsible for amending its current development plan to incorporate action in response to the recommendations within 45 working days of receiving this report, showing what the school is going to do about the recommendations. This plan, or a summary of it, will be circulated to all parents at the school.

## Standards

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

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

37. Overall for this question, the judgements of the inspection team match those provided by the school in its self evaluation report

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

38. The overall standards of attainment of pupils as they enter Prestatyn High School in Y7, as measured by the All Wales Reading Test and their National Curriculum (NC) KS2 results, is slightly below the average for Wales. At KS3 the school exceeds all national averages, and broadly matches them at KS4 and in the sixth form.
39. At KS3 there has been a steady improvement in NC test results over the last 6 years. For 2004, for pupils achieving level 5 and above, results are just above the averages for Wales and the Unitary Authority (UA) in English, mathematics and for the core subject indicator (CSI) which records the number of pupils who gain that level in each of the three core subjects. Science was significantly above the Wales and UA averages.
40. At KS4, the proportion of pupils gaining five or more General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) grades A\*-C has closely matched the Wales average over recent years; in 2004 the results for the school were just above the figure for Wales and the UA. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more grades A\*-G consistently exceeds the Wales and UA averages, and only 2% failed to achieve any GCSE or equivalent qualification compared to an all Wales average of 8%. The success at A\*-G is a good reflection of the school's inclusion policies.
41. In 2004 the overall GCSE performance of boys and girls was equal; in the core subjects, boys did better than girls in mathematics and science and the reverse was true in English. Results in science were significantly above the Wales and UA average, but English and mathematics were below both Wales and the UA. 38% of both boys and girls achieved the CSI, which equalled the average for Wales.
42. In the sixth form, the average points score for students taking two or more Advanced Level (A level) examinations has gradually improved over the past 6 years, and for 2004 was one point above the Wales average and equal to the UA average. The proportion of candidates achieving A-C grades is just below the Wales and UA averages but equals the national average for A-E grades. Vocational courses are a recent development, and whilst results are good there is insufficient data to make valid comparisons.

43. Performance in NC tests and public examinations in KS3, KS4 and in the sixth form have improved since the previous inspection.
44. In 2004 the school met or exceeded performance targets agreed with the UA. Most targets were appropriate given past performance, but, following the improved 2004 results, the KS3 targets in mathematics and science agreed for 2005 and 2006 are now not sufficiently challenging.
45. The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) produces annual tables that place schools in bands based on similar free school meal (FSM) entitlement. For 2003 results, the school did not compare well for the proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSE grades A\*-C, but was in the top 25% of schools for the proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSE grades A\*-G. It was below the average for all KS3 core subjects and the CSI. The school was, however, at the top of its free school meal band, and the sixth form students had a lower FSM take up than pupils in KS3 and KS4: if these had been excluded from the figures, the school would have been in the next higher band and all the indicators would have been at least above average.
46. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) generally achieve well for their ability at the end of both key stages, and most achieve a GCSE qualification in a range of subjects. A small number of low ability pupils at KS4 do not achieve as well as they could.
47. At GCSE in 2004, most subjects across the curriculum achieved results broadly in line with the gradual improvement in overall results, and over a third exceeded national averages.
48. In the six subjects inspected, 55% of lessons in KS3 have no important shortcomings; this rises to 70% in KS4. In KS4, 15% of lessons have outstanding features. Only 5% of lessons in KS3, and 2% at KS4 have important shortcomings. The school exceeds the WAG targets on standards of achievement that 50% of lessons should have no important shortcomings.
49. In information technology standards are good and in KS4 there are outstanding features. In design technology, science and vocational subjects standards are good with no important shortcomings. There are some shortcomings in KS4 in mathematics and KS3 in physical education.
50. In the sixth form 92% of lessons have no important shortcomings and 14% have outstanding features. No lessons have important shortcomings, and in information technology and in Y13 in physical education there are outstanding features.
51. Overall standards of achievement have improved since the previous inspection as have standards in all the six subjects inspected with the exception of KS4 mathematics.

52. Nearly 60% of Y11 pupils progress on to study in Y12, the majority completing the year with just under three quarters staying to complete their Y13 studies. Of those who left at the end of Y12 half went into further education.
53. Standards in listening, speaking, reading and writing are good throughout the school. They show respect for each other's views in whole class situations and in pair and group work. In most lessons pupils and students give extended answers when required. Pupils are articulate, confident, fluent and most pose questions and can argue a case. In many subjects there is good knowledge and use of subject vocabulary.
54. Pupils read well. Those with reading difficulties are given effective specialist support. They read with fluency and accuracy but reading aloud is not a common feature in all subjects. They read a wide range of material and in most cases with good understanding. In a few instances there is insufficient provision of Learning Support Assistants (LSA) to ensure that pupils with SEN have full understanding of texts. In many subjects, pupils skim and scan for information and extract details appropriately. There is good development of inference and deduction.
55. Standards of writing are good. They write well in a variety of forms for a range of purposes. Extended writing is evident in many subjects. Good skills are characterised by effective structure and expression. At all key stages presentation is usually good and in the writing of the most able pupils and students is often very good.
56. Overall, the standards of pupils' numeracy are good throughout the school. In the subjects inspected, there was evidence of the pupils using arithmetic and algebraic skills in calculations, accurate measuring and drawing, the analysis of questionnaires and budgets, and the use of formulae in spreadsheets.
57. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills are good. The skills taught in information technology lessons are extended by a range of valid experiences in many curriculum subjects in KS3. Pupils' ability to employ their ICT knowledge is good and most departments enable pupils to make effective use of their skills.
58. Pupils produce a good quality of work using text and graphics, they are able to record, save and analyse information using spreadsheets and databases. Pupils use computers competently and effectively to control, measure and accurately operate equipment. They are confident and thorough in their approach to gathering information from a variety of sources including the Internet and school intranet. Pupils also make good use of ICT in the presentation and enhancement of their work.
59. There is no formal strategy to collate pupils' ICT progress and achievement across the curriculum.

### **Pupils' progress in learning**

60. In line with the school's approaches to inclusion and equal opportunities, all pupils, regardless of social, ethnic or linguistic background make good progress and achieve well. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
61. Most pupils understand what they are doing and why they are doing it. Pupils understand how well they are doing and they are increasingly involved in self assessment and target setting – a process that will involve them all at half-termly intervals.
62. Most pupils have a positive attitude to their work, behave reasonably and develop their understanding, skills and abilities successfully. A small number of pupils cause distraction in lessons in a small number of classes.
63. Across the school pupils' personal and key skills are developed well in most lessons. There are good examples of pupils and students using acquired skills to solve problems and to propose solutions in both familiar and new situations.

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

64. The vast majority of the pupils in the school show good attitudes to learning, show an interest in their work and have the ability to sustain concentration in lessons. Most are keen to engage with lesson activities and work in a sustained fashion; their concentration is occasionally compromised by the distracting behaviour of a small minority of pupils.
65. The standard of behaviour of the vast majority of the pupils is good, with pupils being aware of the high standards expected of them. Pupils move around the school in a sensible and orderly manner, are polite, courteous and respectful to one another, their teachers and non-teaching staff.
66. Overall attendance for 2003/2004 was satisfactory at 90%. This is, however, below the target of 92% set by WAG for 2004/2005. The unauthorised absence figure for the school, 0.7%, compares well with the Wales and UA averages of 1.6%. The school complies with the NAW Circular 3/99, and works hard to encourage good attendance.
67. Most pupils move between lessons purposefully and in an orderly way. Despite the distances involved between some teaching areas little unnecessary time is lost and most pupils are punctual.
68. Students in the sixth form are well behaved and have a good attitude to their work and to their role and responsibilities. Attendance last year was 85%, which the school has identified as needing improvement. They play an important and responsible role in the school in supporting younger pupils.
69. Problem solving skills are mainly good. In a number of subjects pupils use their initiative well to construct individual answers to a range of problems. Pupils are

often creative in response to solving problems, and evidence of this was observed in lessons across the curriculum.

70. Overall, pupils and students organise and manage their work effectively. Not all use their school diaries fully to record homework and other deadlines.
71. The ability to work with others is good overall. Pupils collaborate well in a variety of situations where they are generally considerate, respectful and supportive of each other.
72. Pupils are well aware of issues related to equality of opportunity and racial equality.

## The quality of education and training

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

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

73. Overall for this question, the judgements of the inspection team match those provided by the school in its self evaluation report.

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

74. Both the proportion of teaching which has no important shortcomings, and the proportion which has outstanding features, have improved since the previous inspection. Overall, the school meets the WAG targets for the quality of teaching. However the quality of teaching is less good in KS3 than elsewhere in the school, and here, at 6%, it exceeds the WAG target of 5% for the proportion of lessons with important shortcomings.

75. There are no important shortcomings in 64% of lessons in KS3, rising to 70% in KS4. There are outstanding features in 8% of lessons in KS3 and 15% in KS4.

76. In KS3 and KS4, in the inspected subjects, teaching is mostly good with no important shortcomings. There are some shortcomings, outweighed by good features in mathematics (KS4) and physical education (KS3). There are outstanding features in the teaching of information technology in KS4.

77. In the sixth form 14% of lessons observed had outstanding features; teaching in information technology, mathematics and science is particularly good with outstanding features. No lessons had important shortcomings.

78. Across the school, the great majority of teachers have established good relationships with pupils which promote positive attitudes to work. This is supported by the successful Choose to Succeed Policy.

79. The teaching staff are suitably qualified and have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. Their planning of lessons is mostly good, and includes planning for the teaching and development of key skills. Many lessons start with the identification of the key skills to be emphasised during the lesson.

80. The school has developed a model of a 'good' lesson, which has been evident across the school in most lessons. Objectives are appropriately shared with pupils at the start of most lessons; occasionally opportunities are missed when these are not discussed or explained clearly, and in some cases they are not re-visited at the end of the lesson.

81. Teaching is nearly always accurate and appropriate to the abilities of the class being taught. Most lessons have clear explanations by teachers of the work being done.
82. Teachers use a range of teaching strategies to help motivate and interest pupils and most lessons have good pace and challenge. Many lessons start with useful question and answer activities to recall previous learning; however, in a small number of lesson there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to give extended oral answers. Occasionally teaching is predictable and fails to provide sufficient challenge and motivation for pupils.
83. Teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop problem solving and creative skills, via group discussions, presentations and practical and experimental tasks. Group and pair work is a strong feature of many lessons.
84. The use of resources is good and these are often amended to suit particular pupils. Learning support assistants (LSAs) are generally used well though some flexibility is lost as some of these staff are allocated by the UA to specific pupils. Where support is available, pupils with SEN returning to mainstream classes make good progress.
85. The school actively promotes equal opportunities and social inclusion with almost all pupils achieving qualifications at the end of statutory schooling. Most pupils spoken to felt they are treated fairly, given good support and not excluded from any aspect of the life and work of the school.
86. Classwork is supported by homework which most pupils record in their school diaries. Parents can usefully check these and have an opportunity to sign the diary and write comments on the work done.

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

87. Teachers have a good knowledge of the pupils they teach and the progress they make.
88. Pupils interviewed stated that they understand their assessment grades and were well aware of their progress and attainment. They are helpfully given grade and level descriptors and attainment and targets are increasingly based on national curriculum levels and public examination grades. Pupils spoken to were aware of their targets and many felt this helped encourage them to improve.
89. Books are marked regularly and detailed feedback to pupils is often by spoken comment and not extended written comment. Self assessment by pupils has been successfully introduced in some subjects and is being extended across the school. Teachers keep appropriate and accurate records of assessments made.

90. In the six inspected subjects assessment is good other than in KS3 and KS4 mathematics where there are some shortcomings. There are outstanding features in information technology.
91. Assessment in the sixth form is always good with mathematics and information technology having outstanding features.
92. Assessment data, both internal and external, is collected and analysed appropriately. This process should continue to improve as, in line with its development plan, the school has just introduced, from September 2004, software which will allow for increased sophistication in the collection and analysis of data. A helpful initiative is the recent introduction of standardised and predictive tests, which should make target setting at school and pupil level more rigorous and detailed.
93. The school satisfies all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Examination Boards.
94. Good written reports to parents are published once a year and contain actual achievement and target grades. There are subject specific comments and advice on improvement; this advice is occasionally too general in character to be helpful. Tutors and senior staff also provide informative comments on the pupil's personal and social progress. Parents and pupils have the opportunity to respond to these reports.
95. Record systems vary slightly between the different heads of house. All are systematic, manageable and the information held is common to all. Records contain appropriate and useful information which is held securely. Requirements on the disclosure of information are satisfied.

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

<b>Grade 2:</b> Good features and no important shortcomings.
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96. Overall for this question, the judgements of the inspection team match those provided by the school in its self evaluation report.

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

97. The curriculum overall meets the needs of all pupils and reflects the aims set out for pupils of statutory school age in the Education Act 1996. The curriculum is accessible for all pupils including those with special educational needs. Pupils have opportunities to gain an appropriate range of GCSE and vocational qualifications. Access to the sixth form is open to all students; they have opportunities to gain qualifications at A, AS and vocational courses in addition to key skill awards.
98. The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced in each key stage. It provides effective continuity and progression between years and key stages. The curriculum in KS3 meets the requirements of the NC and religious education. However, there are no drama lessons in KS3. The unsatisfactory time-tabling arrangements for music in Y9 and the shortage of accommodation limit the provision. In KS4 all pupils continue to study the statutory core subjects, however in Welsh a significant number of pupils do not have sufficient time to complete the assessments required for entry for the half GCSE course. Pupils have an extensive choice of subjects and vocational courses in the option structure; the school ensures that pupils follow an appropriately balanced programme.
99. In the sixth form, students can choose from an extensive programme of advanced level (A2), advanced supplementary (AS), and vocational courses; the programme is enriched by the twilight distance learning courses in law, sociology and psychology. Good opportunities are also available for students wishing to return to school for one year to gain accreditation through GNVQ courses.
100. The planning for the development of key skills across the curriculum is good, overall. In the majority of schemes of work, opportunities have been identified for pupils to develop basic and key skills. In KS3, pupils and teachers are encouraged to record when certain skills have been successfully achieved in communication, numeracy and information technology. At present, no audit of numeracy across the curriculum has been carried out. There is one time-tabled ICT period each week in Y7 and Y8 where pupils develop a wide range of skills. In Y9, ICT is integrated into the design and technology teaching programme; this limits progression in the development of some skills. In the sixth form, key skills are time-tabled in lessons after school. This initiative is very successful with a large number of students gaining external accreditation.

101. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is available for all years and is an outstanding feature of the school. In addition to a wide range of clubs that meet during the lunch-hour and after school, there are visits off-site to places of interest, and to venues such as theatres and galleries. A considerable number of pupils represent the school in musical and sporting activities with significant success. Many visits abroad take place for a range of valuable curricular and social purposes. Pupils and students benefit from the range of activities available, which broaden their experiences and promote their personal and social development.
102. The provision for personal and social education is well planned, covers an appropriate range of topics and fulfils ACCAC framework requirements. Form teachers deliver the programme but aspects are also taught in science and religious education lessons and by specialists such as careers advisers and counsellors.
103. In KS3, the programme is enhanced by special events. In Y7, the timetable is suspended for pupils to take part in Eco activities. Pupils in Y8 take part in a Health Fair and Y9 in a two-day Multi-cultural event. The programme is extended into the sixth form providing students with opportunities to study issues in more depth through a general studies programme and focus on preparation for higher education.
104. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. The curriculum and the daily life of the school give the pupils good opportunities to gain knowledge and to create a spiritual awareness. The quality of worship is good in assemblies with many effectively used to reinforce school values; in some tutor groups there is no act of collective worship.
105. Moral development is fostered successfully through the school's emphasis on respect, consideration for others and responsible behaviour around the school and in the vast majority of classes. Pupils respond with understanding in discussion of issues such as racism and human rights. Through their support for charities, particularly in the sixth form, they show concern and care for children and people less fortunate than themselves.
106. There is a strong sense of community within the school. The relationships between pupils themselves and with their teachers is good. They mix very well socially and work together naturally across the age range. They are friendly, polite and ready to help each other and visitors to the school.
107. Multi-cultural education is reflected in many aspects of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities in a number of subjects. A very successful multi-cultural awareness initiative which has gained a Welsh Secondary Schools Association (WSSA) Award is organised each year for Y9 pupils.
108. The school provides well focused and useful information for parents who appreciate the values and attitudes fostered by the school. The Parent Teachers' Association is active both generally and via a number of fund raising

events. Parents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the school. (Over 850 questionnaires were returned to the inspection team)

109. The school has good links with the community and organisations in the town. Local residents benefit from the voluntary community service organised by the Millennium volunteers and the Eco- club. Local enterprises provide good support for work related education, the multi-cultural awareness days and opportunities within the vocational programmes.
110. Well-established, constructive links, both pastoral and curricular, with primary schools facilitate easy transition from KS2 to KS3. Curricular links are particularly strong in English, mathematics and science; this was acknowledged by a WSSA Award in 2003. Another valuable link with primary schools is established through the Prestatyn Youth Arts Festival. There are useful partnerships with other secondary schools and a good knowledge of local college provision which ensures that older pupils can select appropriate educational options as they leave KS4.
111. The school has good links with initial teacher training institutions. Each year the school hosts up to twenty trainee teachers, some are then appointed as teachers at the school.
112. In KS3, KS4 and the sixth form the curriculum complies with legal requirements.

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

113. Good careers education and guidance is delivered by a professional careers advisor. It is closely integrated with work-related education in the personal and social education (PSE) programme. Account is taken of ACCAC's framework for careers education and guidance. Y10 pupils undertake a useful, well monitored 2-week work experience for which they are prepared by the input of a team of local businessmen in a two-day induction programme. The close links with local employers also allows all Y12 students the opportunity of a one week placement in addition to support and visits by students following vocational courses.
114. The Cwricwlwm Cymreig features in pupils' work in many subjects and schemes of work. During the last year the school has begun to raise awareness of bilingualism with displays and signs in corridors and entries in the daily bulletin. At present there is no school policy for the promotion of the Cwricwlwm Cymreig, however a full audit is planned in the School Development Plan.
115. The school is successful in enabling all pupils with SEN full access to the curriculum. They are encouraged to achieve success in each key stage and to participate fully in the life of the school. Very good arrangements are made for pupils with physical difficulties.
116. Pupils' awareness and understanding of sustainable development and global citizenship is developed in several subjects including geography, science,

technology and PSE. Issues are further promoted by the Eco- club with members involved in recycling materials, improving the environment of the school and conservation projects in the community. The school has been successful in its application for Green Flag status.

117. A Careers Convention, the two-day induction programme and visits to the school by many speakers broaden and reinforce pupils' understanding of the work place. These and other links via the local business forum supported by informative collaboration with Careers Wales, keep teachers, parents and pupils well acquainted with the current needs of employers.
118. Good teaching strategies in many areas of the curriculum provide many opportunities for pupils to develop problem solving and decision making skills. Outside lessons these entrepreneurial skills are well nurtured in all key stages through activities like the Dynamo Project, Industry Days, Environmental Projects and Young Enterprise schemes.
119. The school is successful in ensuring that pupils and students acquire the appropriate knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes to progress. They are developing as independent learners and taking more responsibility for their own learning. The breadth and quality of the curriculum ensures that the learning experiences reflect national priorities and lay the foundation for lifelong learning.

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

<b>Grade 1:</b> Good with outstanding features.
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120. Overall for this question, the judgements of the inspection team match those provided by the school in its self evaluation report.

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

121. The school plans and manages its care arrangements very effectively. Pupils and students are very well supported by committed teachers. Pupils know that when they report personal concerns to members of the pastoral staff, then issues are dealt with promptly and sensitively. There is increasing and very effective use of support services such as the education social workers (ESW), counsellors, the educational psychologist and learning support assistants.
122. Heads of house offer outstanding support to pupils in their care. They know pupils very well and offer continuous support to pupils as they progress from Y7 to Y11. They form close links with parents and carers, and work in partnership with them to ensure that support and guidance meets individual needs. Parents are particularly appreciative of the quality of care provided by heads of house.
123. Pupils' diaries provide a range of very useful information on the school's policies and offer further opportunities for parents to contact the school but there is inconsistent use of these by pupils and parents. Other documents issued to parents by the school are clear and informative.
124. In Y9 and Y11, pupils are satisfied with the very good impartial guidance given by subject teachers and careers staff on courses and options available for study. Guidance follows the school's policy for equal opportunities.
125. The pastoral links with the feeder primary schools are very good. The programme of induction helps pupils to feel safe and to settle quickly into the school. Some of the arrangements represent outstanding practice.
126. The programme for personal, health and social education is well planned and co-ordinated. Form tutors deliver the programme but aspects are also taught in science and religious education lessons, in assemblies and by specialists such as careers advisers and counsellors.
127. Tutors monitor pupils' academic progress as part of the process of reporting to parents and compiling Progress Files. There is identification of under achievement followed by one to one counselling by tutors and heads of house. There is good liaison with parents. There is good communication between tutors and heads of house in monitoring behaviour. Records kept by heads of house enable them to build up a profile of individuals behaviour over time.

128. The procedures for monitoring punctuality and attendance are also good. Communications between administrative staff, tutors, heads of house and the education social worker are effective with prompt contact with parents.
129. Pupils and students in all years receive well planned guidance and careers education within the programme for personal and social education and in discrete careers lessons in Y10. There is specialist careers support for pupils with special and additional needs. Interviews are arranged for Y11 pupils and for students in the sixth form. Local business people give very valuable support for the Young Enterprise and Dynamo projects.
130. There are well documented and effective procedures for dealing with pupils' health and safety. Minor issues of health and safety were reported to the headteacher during the inspection.
131. The school has a clear Child Protection Policy which is in line with UA guidelines. A named teacher is responsible for administering of the thorough Looked After Children Policy. Pupils are educated well through personal and social education lessons to know where to go for help if they are in need of protection.
132. The school and the UA have clear guidelines for responding to appeals and complaints.

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

133. The school has regard for the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) has close links with the feeder primary schools.
134. Pupils with SEN have their needs diagnosed carefully. All subject staff are given a copy of the well prepared individual education plan (IEP) which they use to inform the teaching of the pupil. Whilst there is provision for more able pupils, further support for these pupils is needed.
135. There are regular and effective reviews of pupils' progress, which involve parents at the Annual Review and other consultations.
136. Pupils with physical, learning and behavioural difficulties are supported sensitively to help them reach their full potential. Subject teachers generally work well with the support staff. Very good braille resources have been provided for a visually impaired pupil to enable him to access the full curriculum at the level of his ability.
137. All pupils with SEN have access to the National Curriculum and are encouraged to take full part in the life of the school.
138. Pupils with SEN are taught well in the SEN department, with three full time teachers, including the SENCO. There is an LSA who effectively manages the Successmaker computer programme, and informs teaching staff of any

problems highlighted. The UA provides 17 LSAs who give good support to identified pupils.

139. The SENCO manages staff, resources, accommodation and outside agencies efficiently to provide effective and relevant support for pupils.

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

140. The 'Choose to Succeed' Policy gives a positive framework to encourage good behaviour. There is very good implementation of the policy by senior managers, heads of house and most teachers. However, not all staff members use it effectively. The school successfully provides extensive counselling support for more challenging pupils and those with serious emotional difficulties. A very small number of pupils are being educated off site.
141. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported by a teacher employed by the UA. Some pupils with very little English need further help in lessons
142. The school recognises and celebrates diversity through multicultural activities and visits as well as through personal and social education and religious education lessons. Particularly good practice is the Multi-cultural week for pupils in year 9. Any reported racial abuse is acted upon and recorded.
143. There is an Equal Opportunities Policy in place and care is ensured that it applies to staff as well as pupils. Issues of racial, gender, religious and physical diversity are addressed through personal and social education, religious education, assembly and drama programmes.
144. The Six Formers Protecting You (SPY) policy is effectively implemented by senior pupils to support lower school pupils. They work with the pupils individually and in groups, as well as providing support for some timid pupils who need to build confidence travelling to and from school.
145. Great care is taken to prepare for pupils who have a physical disability. Good use is made of the resources available to them from the UA. Pupils with communication difficulties are well supported into Y12 and Y13 if necessary.

## Leadership and management

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

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

146. Overall for this question, the judgements of the inspection team match those provided by the school in its self evaluation report.

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

147. The school has clear and appropriate aims that focus on equality of opportunity, the pursuit of excellence and providing a caring environment. These give direction to the work of the school and inform decision making by governors and management. Overall the school is successfully achieving its aims and is particularly successful in those related to equality of opportunity, inclusion and care. The head and senior managers give the school effective and clear leadership.
148. National and local priorities are clearly reflected in the work and planning of the school. School staff are represented on local business organisations and the school has good relations with local further education providers and other external agencies.
149. The School Development Plan (SDP) is clearly set out and contains well chosen priorities for both the school and subject departments. Priorities, responsibilities, resources and success criteria are all identified and the success of the previous year's plan is reviewed. The costs of the required resources are insufficiently detailed.
150. Targets for the performance of the school, based on individual pupil achievements, are agreed annually with the UA. These are included in the SDP and reviewed annually. Target setting from September 2004 should become more refined with the use of recently introduced software and standardised testing of pupils. This will give detailed analysis and statistical predictions. Targets are shared with individual pupils and parents/carers at appropriate and published dates throughout the year.
151. In 2004 the school met or exceeded performance targets agreed with the UA. Most targets were appropriate and challenging relative to past performance, but, following the improved 2004 results, the KS3 targets in mathematics and science agreed for 2005 will need to be revised upwards.
152. There are good processes, including Performance Management, for the identification of the training needs of the staff, and for the planning and review of

this training. School training days are well used to address local and national initiatives. The school recently gained the Investors in People Award.

### **How well governors meet their responsibilities**

153. The Governing Body is highly effective and very supportive with the individual governors having a wide range of expertise and ability. Governors understand their roles within the school and are centrally involved in strategic planning. They meet regularly and are kept well informed about the progress of the school and aspects affecting its performance.
154. The Governing Body fulfils the legal requirements placed upon it thereby ensuring that good standards of education are provided for the pupils.
155. The home to school agreement the annual report to parents and the school prospectus are helpful and accurate documents.

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

<b>Grade 2:</b> Good features and no important shortcomings
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156. Overall for this question, the judgements of the inspection team match those provided by the school in its self evaluation report.

### **How effectively the school's performance is monitored and evaluated**

157. Overall the school's self-evaluation report is an accurate analysis of its strengths and weaknesses; it addresses the seven key questions of the common inspection framework. The report identifies good features, shortcomings and the action being taken, and grades each key question. Overall, the school's judgements match those of the inspection team.

158. Departmental self-evaluation is also broadly accurate and comprehensive. In the subjects inspected it is evident that staff have a good knowledge of the abilities and progress of the pupils they teach. Many departments usefully involve pupils in the assessment of their own performance measured against published criteria.

159. In the six subjects inspected in detail, self-evaluation is good with outstanding features in information technology, good with no important shortcomings in design technology, mathematics and vocational subjects, and has some shortcomings in science and physical education.

160. There are effective systems in place for the collection and analysis of data which, from the start of this September term, should be enhanced through the recent introduction of new computer based systems. Each Autumn Term there is a detailed school and departmental analysis of examination results. Lesson observation, which includes peer observation, takes place on a regular basis for both self-evaluation and Performance Management; this sometimes involves the participation of Advisors from the UA. Department based lesson observations sometimes lack sufficient rigour and appropriate follow up.

161. The head of the sixth form monitors students' progress carefully and the school uses standardised testing to help set accurate targets for individual students. Underachieving students are interviewed and supported as necessary.

162. The views of pupils and students are given full consideration at the School Council. Many pupils and students said that the Council is useful and often influential.

163. The staff of the school are fully involved in the self-evaluation process, contributing at subject and house level and by work on a range of working parties. Members of the senior management team are linked to departments and work with the heads of department to review progress against the development plan each half-term.

164. Well over half the parents and guardians at the school returned a questionnaire to the inspection team. The great majority expressed satisfaction with the school and feel that they are encouraged to play an active role in the school. They are invited to comment weekly in their child's school and homework diary and have the opportunity to respond to the annual school report on their child's progress. The school has recently used a commercial company to survey parents' views of the school.

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

165. The processes established by the school to evaluate and review progress and standards provide helpful and essential information which is used to inform planning and decision making.
166. Each section of the SDP starts with a review of progress against the previous year's development plan. Whole school and department priorities are identified using this review to inform decisions. The SDP contains detailed performance targets for the next two years which are agreed with the UA – these are helpfully set in context by being presented alongside the performance over the last three years.
167. Timescales, responsibilities and success criteria are clearly identified and are appropriate to the priorities of the school. Resource implications are clearly identified, but costs are not always included..
168. The school has set up a series of working parties to drive forward whole school initiatives such as the development of key skills, personal and social education, attendance and 'Choose to Succeed' policy. Helpfully, the SDP contains reviews of progress and development plans for each of these groups, which enhances their effectiveness and increases their impact on the school.
169. Subject development plans are an integral part of the SDP and rightly focus priorities on aspects related to improving standards of achievement. They contain insufficient detail on the costs of proposed developments. In the six identified subjects planning has outstanding features in information technology and is good with no shortcomings in design and technology, mathematics, science and vocational subjects. There are shortcomings in physical education.
170. Overall, the school has made good progress at addressing the Key Issues identified in the previous inspection in 1998. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSE grades A\*-C has improved from 45% to 54%. Achievement of the CSI has risen more slowly from 34% to 38%. There has been significant work and progress in the implementation of a key skills strategy although better organisation of numeracy is still required. Good progress has been made in the monitoring of pupils' progress and the development of target setting. Overall, the quantity of resources and the quality of the accommodation has improved although the school has been unable to meet the costs of all the improvements it has identified. Whilst not all tutor groups start the day with a collective act of worship, they do contribute to the spiritual development of pupils, supported by good quality assemblies and other positive experiences across the school.

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

<b>Grade 1:</b> Good with outstanding features
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171. Overall for this question, the judgements of the inspection team match those provided by the school in its self evaluation report.

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

172. The school is well staffed with an equivalent of 95.83 teachers and has a pupil / teacher ratio of 17.79 to 1, which is higher than the national average. Teachers are appropriately and well qualified. There is an effective balance between experienced teachers and those new to the profession, to teach all aspects and subjects of the curriculum throughout the school.

173. A sufficient range of support staff enable the school to run smoothly. They include technicians, librarians, and administration and site maintenance staff. The technicians cover science, IT and resistant materials, but there is no technician support in food technology and textiles. There are 18 classroom support assistants employed by the UA and these give good support to a limited number of pupils with learning, behavioural and / or physical difficulties. These are insufficient to cope with all pupils who need support, including those pupils who have English as an additional language difficulties.

174. Overall there is an adequate supply of textbooks and equipment for subjects throughout the school, including the sixth form. In most subjects each pupil is allocated a book, but teachers are reluctant to allow pupils to take them home. In the sixth form, there are insufficient textbooks in biology. In science there is also a shortage of equipment throughout.

175. The subject IT is well resourced for computers and the school has developed an 'ICT Replacement and Innovation Plan' committee to ensure that ICT spending is directed effectively. Subject areas across the curriculum have limited opportunity to use these facilities and there is very little ICT equipment in individual departments. As a result, pupils rarely experience the benefits of ICT in their teaching and of using ICT to enhance their learning themselves.

176. Accommodation and facilities for physical education are insufficient to cater for all pupils in a school of this size.

177. The accommodation is sufficient for the number of pupils currently on roll. It meets the academic and pastoral needs of the curriculum. As far as possible, rooms for subject areas are grouped together. A small number of lessons are taught in non-specialist rooms. For most subjects the classrooms provide good learning environments and teachers use them well. A number of rooms are narrow and cannot comfortably accommodate the larger classes. There are 10

demountable classrooms. The standard of decoration in rooms throughout the school varies considerably.

178. The displays of pupils work in classrooms and corridors throughout the school are good. They are bright and colourful, and provide a stimulating learning environment.
179. The new library is large and spacious. It has a metal roof, which causes excessive noise in wet weather. The library book stock is low for a school of this size. It has a bank of 6 networked computers. The library is well used by pupils at lunchtimes and after school. During lessons groups of pupils, including six formers, make valuable use of the library for research.
180. Accommodation for the number of students in the sixth form is limited. There is a poorly equipped common room and a small computer room with 10 computers that is available for 65% of the time-tabled lessons. As a result, students also use the library and the canteen cafeteria as study areas
181. The school is clean and well maintained. There is a planned decoration programme for future years to improve the all round condition and appearance.
182. There is insufficient hard standing area for pupils during break and lunchtimes, but the grounds are well maintained. and the main buildings are kept free of litter, but there is litter and cans on the playing fields. In the quadrangle pupils maintain a pond and its surrounding greenery.

### **How efficiently resources are managed to achieve value for money**

183. The financial management of the school is very good. The head, the bursar and the governing bodies' sub-committee for finance effectively manage the available budget. The budget is below average for a school of similar size.
184. Forty per cent of the teaching staff has over 25 years teaching experience and are expensive; staffing accounts for 76% of the total budget. Deployment of staff makes good use of their time, expertise and experience. However, there is a small number of split classes in mathematics and science.
185. The high teaching staff cost has a detrimental effect on capitation for subjects across the curriculum, which at 2.3% of the total budget, is very small. This is reflected in the shortage of ICT resources in subject areas across the curriculum.
186. The allocation of capitation for departments is calculated using an appropriate formula. Departments are able to bid for extra funds to pay for initiatives and projects. The bursar and heads of department receive immediate breakdowns and current balances and they effectively monitor their spending.
187. Financial decisions are well focused on the curriculum needs and the educational priorities identified in the school development plan. Astute financial management ensures good value for money. The school uses all grants that are

available to good effect. The UA and the school, in order to improve facilities, work together to acquire additional and external funding for projects.

188. The bursar is responsible for the day to day running of the finances, although it is actually administered by the UA. The finance sub-committee meets regularly and it receives detailed reports from the head.
189. The recommendations in the most recent auditors' report have either been addressed or are in the process of being addressed.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### Mathematics

<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	Grade 2:	good features and no important shortcomings
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	Grade 3:	good features outweigh shortcomings
<b>Sixth form:</b>	Grade 2:	good features and no important shortcomings

#### Good and outstanding features

##### **KS3 and KS4**

190. Most pupils across the age and ability ranges answer questions orally with clarity, understanding and accuracy. They have a sound knowledge of number, vulgar fractions, decimal fractions and percentages and the relationship between them.
191. Pupils have spatial awareness and understand the concepts of the area of plane figures including circles and volumes of regular solids using the appropriate units.
192. Pupils use calculators appropriately.

##### **KS3**

193. In the NC tests the proportion of pupils gaining at least a level 5, has improved over recent years and is now above the Welsh average. There is no significant difference between the standards of achievement of the boys and the girls.
194. Pupils are aware of prime numbers, prime factors and can calculate the highest common factor of a group of numbers.
195. The more able pupils can solve quadratic equations using a trial and error method and can use Pythagoras' theorem.
196. The less able pupils have a basic knowledge of data handling, can draw pictograms, construct tally charts and draw appropriate graphs. They have an awareness of compass bearings.
197. Pupils with SEN make good progress.

##### **KS4**

198. The more able pupils have a sound knowledge of the sine rule and can apply it to acute angled triangles in everyday situations.
199. The less able pupils who have returned to mainstream classes, are making good progress.

### **Sixth form**

200. Over recent years, there has been a consistently high pass rate at A level with a number of students having the highest grades.
201. Year 13 students have a very good understanding of a range of concepts in pure mathematics, mechanics and statistics. They can adapt this knowledge to solve associated questions.
202. Year 12 students are making progress in understanding the basic concepts of pure mathematics.

### **Shortcomings**

#### **KS3 and KS4**

203. A small number of pupils do not always present their work in a neat, logical way and a small minority of pupils lack confidence in their mathematical abilities.
204. Pupils' learning is not enhanced by the use of ICT.

#### **KS4**

205. The GCSE results for A\* - C passes are below the national averages.
206. A small number of pupils lose concentration and interest and this has a detrimental effect on progress.
207. A small minority of pupils are reluctant to complete coursework effectively and this has an adverse effect on results.
208. There are a small minority of pupils who have returned to lower ability mainstream classes who are not making adequate, satisfactory progress.

### **Sixth form**

209. There are no significant shortcomings.

<b>Science</b>
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<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	Grade 2:	Good features and no important shortcomings.
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	Grade 2:	Good features and no important shortcomings.
<b>Sixth form:</b>	Grade 2:	Good features and no important shortcomings.

### **Good and outstanding features**

#### **KS3**

210. In 2004, 82% of pupils achieved level 5 and above in the key stage 3 tests. This continued the trend of steady improvement over the last five years. This figure is significantly above both the UA and national averages.

211. Most pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of a wide range of topics which cover all aspects of the National Curriculum.
212. Pupils generally have good recall of scientific information and are able to use scientific terms accurately. Most are good listeners and willingly contribute to class discussions.
213. They have a good recall of key concepts and ideas and can apply them to a range of problems and applications in everyday life.
214. The need for accurate measurements in practical work is understood by most pupils. They work systematically and safely when undertaking practical work.

#### **KS4**

215. In 2004, as in previous years, most of the cohort was entered for the science GCSE double award examination. Almost all achieved A\* - G grades, with well over half achieving the higher A\* - C grades. These results are well above the average for Wales.
216. Most pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of topics covering life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes.
217. Most have a good recall of previous work and can apply their knowledge, using appropriate scientific terms, to describe and explain scientific observations.
218. Throughout the key stage, pupils acquire knowledge and awareness of the contributions made by science to everyday life. They recognise the role of science within industry, the environment and the economy.
219. Most pupils successfully complete their scientific investigations and take accurate readings over an appropriate range of observations. They are aware of the importance of repeat readings and of the need to minimise errors in their practical work.

#### **Sixth form**

220. Most students in the three subjects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics make good progress relative to their ability. Over the last three years at A level the vast majority of students gained grades A - E, with most achieving A - C grades.
221. Key concepts are understood by most students. The majority can apply their theoretical knowledge and understanding to a wide range of problems and applications in the three subjects.
222. Most students take great care in recording their lesson notes and produce comprehensive and well presented files of work.
223. In practical work, at both AS and A level, students achieve good standards. They develop good analysing and evaluating skills. The quality of students'

practical work is of a high standard and contributes significantly to their knowledge and understanding of the subject.

## **Shortcomings**

### ***KS3 and KS4***

224. Some pupils have an insecure knowledge and understanding in key areas. They make slow progress which is further hindered in some cases by absence, in others by incomplete work or attention in lessons.
225. In a few classes, the poor behaviour of some pupils hinders the progress of others.
226. Some investigative skill areas are not sufficiently developed and do not build on abilities developed during the excellent KS2 to KS3 transition project.
227. Across both key stages, pupils do not develop ICT in their work.

### ***Sixth form***

228. A few students in all three subjects have an insecure knowledge and understanding of current and previous work. Consequently they have difficulty in applying scientific principles when problem solving.
229. Students' skill development, understanding and experiences are not enhanced sufficiently because of limited use of ICT.
230. Students independent learning skills are underdeveloped.

## **Design and technology**

<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	Grade 2	Good features and no important shortcomings.
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	Grade 2	Good features and no important shortcomings.
<b>Sixth form:</b>	Grade 2	Good features and no important shortcomings.

## **Good and outstanding features**

### ***KS3 / KS4***

231. Pupils demonstrate an understanding of the processes of designing and making and display competency in a variety of skills and techniques.
232. They produce interesting project work using a range of materials and equipment. There is a positive emphasis on health and safety requirements.
233. Practical project work is sound overall with some good examples of work produced in each of the subject areas. Pupils respond cooperatively to focused practical tasks which successfully increase their skills and knowledge in the subject.
234. Pupils calculate, measure and weigh with reasonable accuracy.

- 235. Pupils focus well on their tasks. They display interest and involvement and make positive and responsive contributions in discussions, and they can explain the development of their work using technical terminologies.
- 236. Written and oral work is good and pupils work purposefully, both individually and in groups.
- 237. They show good concentration, ask questions and express opinions confidently, they are attentive and act upon information presented in a productive manner.
- 238. Pupils evaluate their work objectively and many are able to suggest improvements to their final designs. ICT skills are integrated into all pupils' experience.
- 239. There is helpful support for pupils with SEN who make good progress in relation to their ability.

### ***Sixth form***

- 240. Students can identify and approach problem solving effectively; they can discuss areas for research and analysis in their designing.
- 241. Work in design folders illustrates that students have a coherent and considered approach to their design tasks, resulting in a clear specification of their intentions and a thorough statement of their ideas.
- 242. Project activities are relevant and adequately reflect an awareness and understanding of designing and making. Students gain valuable experience in using a variety of materials and show a sound understanding of a range of making processes.
- 243. Students are articulate and enthusiastic about their tasks. They offer sound opinions about their ideas. There is much group discussion, interaction and independent working.
- 244. Students make good use of ICT when researching and developing ideas.

### **Shortcomings**

#### ***KS3 and KS4***

- 245. Design work and the general presentation and content of design folders is inconsistent in some instances, although there are some examples of well developed investigative work, more source / stimulus information, including the use of ICT is needed.

#### ***Sixth form***

- 246. The organisation, layout and presentation of design folios need development.
- 247. Students need to develop a more defined and sensitive use of colour in folio work.

## Information technology

<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	Grade 2	Good features and no important shortcomings..
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	Grade 1	Good with outstanding features
<b>Sixth form:</b>	Grade 1	Good with outstanding features

### Good and outstanding features

#### **KS3**

248. In year 7 pupils manage a computer well and understand and make use of a variety of functions.
249. They use the mouse with confidence and demonstrate competence in handling menus and icons and in the loading, saving, printing and retrieving of their work.
250. Pupils communicate information well and are effective in their use of word processing and desktop publishing applications. They are able to make use of information obtained from a variety of sources including the internet.
251. They produce good work when combining text and images to develop tasks in a range of contexts and purposes.
252. They plan their work carefully and take time to draft and re-draft their final outcomes.
253. Pupils demonstrate good handling of information, including number, through the use of databases and spreadsheets.
254. Pupils have an understanding of the theory aspects of their work and make use of appropriate terminology in their discussions.

#### **KS4**

255. In KS4 pupils acquire and apply a broad range of skills for their coursework tasks within GCSE examinations. They generate interesting and challenging project work that requires both good problem solving and perseverance.
256. Pupils can identify problems efficiently. They analyse relevant information well and develop detailed solutions and make reflective evaluations of their progress. Their work in these areas is of an outstanding quality.
257. More able pupils are given sound challenges through a variety of extension work and less able pupils make very good progress within some structured, modified tasks.

#### **Sixth form**

258. Students demonstrate positive attitudes to problem solving and in developing and applying a comprehensive range of ICT skills through their project work.

- 259. They use a range of applications to access information and use their data effectively through the use of appropriate software packages.
- 260. Students have an excellent understanding and knowledge of the theory relating to computer systems.
- 261. Project work reflects much relevant research from a variety of sources, it is excellently organised, structured, completed and well presented to a high standard.
- 262. Students often work independently and in their own time.
- 263. There is much excellent discussion and interactive, collaborative working in
- 264. classes .

### **Shortcomings**

#### **KS3**

- 265. Pupils ability to use ICT in order to extend and enhance their learning is underdeveloped

<b>Physical education</b>
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<b>Key Stage 3:</b>	Grade 3:	good features outweigh shortcomings.
<b>Key Stage 4:</b>	Grade 2:	good features and no important shortcomings
<b>Sixth form:</b>	Grade 2:	good features and no important shortcomings

### **Good and outstanding features**

#### **KS3**

- 266. In games pupils demonstrate good ball control and build up skills well in practice. Most pass accurately and are developing good timing in football and rugby.
- 267. In netball, the most able pupils can use a range of passes and are beginning to establish good footwork.
- 268. Less able girls and boys can take skills into small games effectively.
- 269. Pupils are developing a good understanding of the rules and laws of games. Many can evaluate situations and performance well and offer sound critical comment.
- 270. In gymnastics many pupils, boys especially, demonstrate good quality and range of movement and awareness of space and of their own body. They link movements well and can identify qualities of shape and body tension. Almost all can repeat and improve short sequences. They work to objectives and provide useful critical comment to others.

#### **KS4**

271. Pupils work with confidence, enthusiasm and commitment.
272. In examination groups they draw effectively on personal experience to aid understanding. They apply themselves well to learning and show good recall of previous work.
273. A majority of pupils can demonstrate good practical skills across all areas of study. In gymnastics and aerobics most have a very good range of movement and agility, and give attention to detail.
274. All can relate physical activity to health and at GCSE level this is an outstanding feature.
275. They work responsibly both independently and in groups offering good critical comments and supporting others well.
276. All have a sound knowledge of safety issues. GCSE groups have a good understanding of the purpose and importance of risk assessment.

#### **Sixth form**

277. 'A' level examination results are very good, consistently exceeding the school average for A – C grades.
278. In examination groups, pupils demonstrate a depth of understanding of new and complex concepts both in written and verbal responses to questions and tasks. This is an outstanding feature.
279. They are able to give good critical comments and frame good quality questions, contributing with confidence to discussion. They relate new learning well to their own experiences in order to aid understanding.
280. The voluntary PE group is well attended and of a high standard.
281. All behave responsibly, work well in groups and take responsibility for their own learning.

#### **Shortcomings**

##### **KS3**

282. In games, a minority of pupils struggle with timing of passes in football and netball.
283. An unacceptably large number of pupils show only limited progress with footwork in netball. In some groups, poor basic skills hamper games development in anything other than very small sided games.
284. In gymnastics, on a small number of occasions the quality of movement does not improve throughout the lesson and pupils show lack of perseverance, loss of

concentration and lack confidence to try new things. Some pupils display only a limited range of movements.

#### **KS4**

285. Some pupils have difficulty sustaining effort and concentration over a double period.

#### **Sixth form**

286. There are no important shortcomings.

### **Vocational education**

#### **Health and Social Care**

**Key Stage 4:** Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings.  
**Sixth form:** Grade 2: good features and no important shortcomings.

#### **Good and outstanding features**

#### **KS4**

287. Pupils display a good understanding of Early Years provision and can describe the various roles within related organisations.

288. They can relate the work they do in class to local community care settings, often drawing on personal experiences gained from visits and work experience placements.

289. Research and investigational skills are generally good. Pupils work well to prepare surveys and questionnaires to find out the health, lifestyle and eating habits of teenagers.

290. Numeracy skills are used well to measure height, weight, blood pressure and body mass index. Here pupils are able to identify potential risks to health and decide useful targets for improvement.

291. Most pupils use the computer competently and confidently to improve the overall presentation of their work and to access internet information.

#### **Sixth form**

292. Students have a good understanding of care settings and the dietary needs of different client groups.

293. They acquire sound knowledge of food hygiene practices and nutritional guidelines and usually make healthy choices when they participate in planning meals. Most students discuss their ideas and opinions confidently.

294. Research skills are good and pupils prepare useful questionnaires which they use well to interview clients and carers during visits to local community services.

Students display considerable initiative and self reliance when they organise these visits themselves.

295. ICT skills are used effectively in some instances to present written and graphical information.

### **Shortcomings**

#### ***KS4***

296. A minority of pupils has insecure knowledge and understanding and rely heavily on teacher guidance.

#### ***Sixth form***

297. A small percentage of students have weak recall of nutrition and are reluctant to volunteer answers in discussion sessions.

## **AVCE**

### **Good and outstanding features**

298. Students show good knowledge and understanding of the structure and roles within health and social care settings and confidently discuss issues concerning access to quality care.
299. Purposeful observations of young children are carried out at local nursery and primary schools. Here students are able to assess physical and cognitive development against statistical norms and recognised theories.
300. Other links with the community enhance pupils learning experiences. They enable students to study the effects of communication between client and carer. Personal communication skills are developed well when students plan and carry out interactions with a range of clients.
301. Research tasks are well undertaken and students extract and record information from a variety of sources. Most complete portfolio work successfully.
302. In Y13 ICT and numeracy skills are good and well integrated into assignment tasks.

### **Shortcomings**

303. The quality of written work, shows some shortcomings in depth, structure and analysis.

## **Leisure & Recreation**

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

### **Good and outstanding features**

- 304. Recent examination results show an upward trend and now exceed the Wales average. Students understand targets set and know how to achieve them.
- 305. They demonstrate, by their responses to questions, that they understand the concepts discussed and are able to relate these effectively to their own personal experiences.
- 306. Most students are well motivated, behave responsibly and respectfully towards each other and work well independently. They plan and present their own work well.

### **Shortcomings**

- 307. Working co-operatively with others needs further development.

## **Leisure and Tourism / Travel and Tourism**

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

### **Good and outstanding features**

#### ***KS4***

- 308. Pupils are achieving in line with their ability through a variety of teaching, learning and assessment methods.
- 309. Pupils develop an understanding of how people spend their leisure time and how the leisure industry meets their needs. They are aware of the leisure and tourism organisations that are available locally, and are developing an understanding of the nature of the industry.
- 310. Pupils have an understanding of the importance of customer service in the leisure and tourism industry.

#### ***Sixth form***

- 311. Students make good progress in their understanding and knowledge. They can work independently and in groups to gather information and develop their understanding of the travel and tourism industries.
- 312. Students have a good understanding of the leisure facilities available locally and can suggest ways of improving the provision.

313. Their knowledge of local leisure and tourism organisations is good. Students make good use of first hand experiences involving local businesses to enhance their knowledge and understanding of travel and tourism.
314. They have good knowledge of the importance of customer care in a travel and tourism organisation, and are aware of how customers should be treated in a variety of situations.
315. They make good use of communication, working with others, problem solving and ICT key skills, especially the use of the internet to research various topics. Students also make good use of ICT in their presentations and unit submissions.
316. Students evaluate their own work in order to suggest ways of improving.

### **Shortcomings**

#### ***KS4***

317. No significant shortcomings

#### ***Sixth form***

318. A very small number of students are not performing to their ability.

### **Business**

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

#### **Good and outstanding features**

319. Standards of achievement at AVCE Business are good with most students achieving a pass grade. Standards at GNVQ Intermediate are satisfactory, as they relate to the ability of the students.
320. At both levels students are able to plan their work effectively and are competent in using the assessment criteria, which is provided through a course booklet, to improve their work.
321. They listen attentively, participate in class discussions and work well in pair and group activities. Independent learning is developing in year 12 and evident in year 13.
322. There is a good level of competency in investigative skills as pupils confidently access information from the internet, texts and local firms to complete set tasks.
323. Key skills are highlighted and business students at all levels are particularly confident in communications skills, team work and ICT skills.

## Shortcomings

324. Staff changes have had some impact on standards although this has been managed effectively to minimise disruption to students. The department is developing a strategy to target the more able to enable them to achieve top grades but this is not in place now.

## School's response to the inspection

325. The Headteacher, Staff and Governors welcome the report that has resulted from the inspection carried out by Estyn in October 2004. It is pleasing to note that the findings of the team reflect the self-evaluation report carried out by the school prior to inspection, and that recognition is given to the high standards achieved in so many aspects of the school. We will continue to develop self-evaluation and its role in informing planning for teaching at subject level.
326. The very positive comments regarding the care, support and guidance given to pupils support our school's mission statement which is devoted to promoting equal opportunities and inclusion for all in the pursuit of excellence. It was good to note that the vast majority of pupil behaviour is good and that pupils are aware of the high standards expected of them.
327. We welcome the comments that reflect the astute financial management of the school despite the below average funding we receive. The accommodation issues that have been raised are a direct reflection of the popularity of the school and its budget.
328. We are pleased that the standards in the school are good overall with some subjects having outstanding features. We recognise that we need to continue to develop our target setting with individual pupils, to further improve their levels of achievement. We will follow recommendations made for development in individual subjects, many of which are already in our development plan.
329. It is pleasing to note that the hard work the school has put into developing Key Skills across the curriculum in all Key Stages has been recognised. We will continue to develop this further especially in the integration of numeracy across the curriculum.
330. The school is happy that the report recognises that leadership from the Governors, Head and Senior Management is good, effective and clear. We recognise that this is a reflection of all the managers in the school. We wish to use this clarity of leadership to improve the standards in the school.
331. It is good to note that the quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly from the standards set in the last inspection, which in 1998 stated that Prestatyn High school is a good school. The strengths that have been highlighted will be shared across the school.

332. The school appreciates the professionalism and expertise with which the inspection was carried out and the opportunities for feedback throughout the week. We were especially pleased with the way the school nominee worked, we felt it was valuable for both the school and the inspection team. The report gives us a valuable external audit which matches our own evaluation, giving us a firm base from which to move forward.

## Appendix A

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Prestatyn High School
School type	Community school
Age-range of pupils	11 - 19
Address of school	2 Princes Avenue Prestatyn. Denbighshire
Post-code	LL19 8RS
Telephone number	01745 855204

Headteacher	Mr. A. Keep
Date of appointment	September 1992
Acting Headteacher	Mr. S. Molloy (from July 2004)
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mr. R. Hughes
Reporting inspector	Mr. T. O'Marah
Dates of inspection	4 – 8 October 2004

## Appendix B

### School data and indicators

Year group	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y13	Y 14	Total
Number of pupils	302	297	307	276	261	166	112	-	1721

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	89	13	95.83

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	17.79:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	-
Average teaching group size	22.88
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	81.01

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole School
Term 1	92.7	91.1	90.4	89.4	91.1	83.2	83.8	89.7
Term 2	91.9	91.5	91.3	89.9	88.5	83.1	80.3	89.2
Term 3								

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	13.1
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	14

## Appendix C

### National Curriculum Assessment Results

#### End of key stage 3:

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results: 2004 (National data for 2003)														
Total number of pupils in Y9:														
Percentage of pupils at each level														
		D	A	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP
English	Teacher assessment	School	-	-	-	-	-	6	22	46	19	7	-	-
		National	-	1	-	-	2	9	22	34	21	9	-	-
	Test	School	-	2	-	-	-	10	23	38	21	6	-	-
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	National	-	4	4	-	-	8	23	31	21	9	-	-
		School	-	-	-	-	-	3	20	28	413	8	-	-
	Test	National	-	1	-	-	1	9	22	26	27	13	1	-
Science	Teacher assessment	School	-	3	-	-	-	1	21	25	42	7	-	-
		National	-	6	2	-	-	8	22	23	27	12	-	-
	Test	School	-	-	-	-	-	2	17	48	21.6	11.7	-	-
	National	-	1	-	-	1	9	22	32	24	10	-	-	
	School	-	1	-	-	-	3.7	13	49	20	13	-	-	
	National	-	4	1	-	-	7	20	32	24	11	-	-	

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

Note: National data for this table is for 2003

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	59	In the school	58%
In Wales	56%	In Wales	57%

### Public Examination Results:

For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ	
Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2004	260
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	42

The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2004:	School	UA	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	93	86	87
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	54	48	51
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	91	84	85
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	38	34	38
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	98	97	97
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	78	73	75
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G C or the vocational qualification equivalent	98	92	93
attained no graded GCSE C or the vocational qualification equivalent	2	8	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	0	3	3
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1	12	-	-
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2	0	-	-

For pupils aged 16, 17 and 18, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs	
Number of pupils aged 16, 17 and 18 in January 2004	278
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2004	97
Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2004	8

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 Prestatyn High School – October 2004

	School	UA	Wales
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C	63	66	68
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E	95	96	95
Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects	20	19	20
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ at level 2	18	-	-
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Advanced or NVQ at level 3	32	-	-

## Appendix D

### **Evidence base of the inspection**

Prior to the inspection full discussions were held between the registered inspector and the head and the acting head based on the school's self-evaluation report and the report of the previous inspection in 1998. In addition meetings were held with the staff of the school, with parents and with the governors. Over 850 questionnaires were returned by parents and analysed by the inspection team. Whole school and appropriate subject documents were collected and reviewed by inspectors. All of this information was used to inform the organisation of the inspection and the deployment of inspectors

During the inspection the six identified subjects were inspected in detail and 140 lessons in these subjects were observed. All other teachers were observed teaching at least once (giving 191 lesson observations in total). Formal and informal interviews were held with pupils and the full daily life of the school was observed. The inspection team reviewed pupils' work in exercise books and folders and looked at pupils' work diaries and the school Reports sent to their parents.

During the week the inspection team saw 24 form tutor periods and 4 assemblies, and visits were made to a wide range of clubs and activities. Interviews were held with appropriate heads of department, and with those teachers and managers holding positions with whole school responsibilities.

The performance of the school in public examinations and tests was analysed in detail so that trends in performance over time, and comparisons to local and national data could be identified and accounted for.

## Appendix E

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
T. O'Marah Registered Inspector	Key Questions 1, 2, 5 and 6
R. Cawthorne Lay Inspector	Key Questions 1,2 and 7
A. Edwards	Key Question 7; Mathematics; Numeracy
G.Davies	Key question 3; Sixth form co-ordinator; Chemistry
L. Bithell	Key Question 4; Literacy
K. Watson	Design and technology; Information technology.
M. Herbert	Key Question 1; Design and technology; Vocational subjects
K Davies	Science co-ordinator; Physics
D. Jones	Biology
W. Heron	Physical education; Leisure and recreation
E. Williams	Leisure and tourism; Travel and tourism.
R. Carr	Key Question 4
V. Pritt-Roberts	Business studies
P. Edwards	School's nominee

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### Acknowledgement

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