

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

**A Report on the Quality of Education in**

**St Cyres Comprehensive School  
St Cyres Road  
Penarth  
CF64 2XP**

**School Number: 6735401**

**Dates of Inspection: 23-27 April 2007**

**by**

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

The inspection of St Cyres Comprehensive School took place between 23/04/07 and 26/04/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by Peter Harris undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

<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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **Standard** inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. St. Cyres School is an English medium, mixed, 11-19 foundation school in the Vale of Glamorgan. There are 1494 pupils on roll, of whom 256 are in the sixth form. In April 2001, when the school was last inspected, there were 1536 pupils on roll, including 225 in the sixth form. Thus, while the overall pupil number has fallen slightly, there has been an increase in the number of students in the sixth form.
2. There are five associated primary schools, representing Penarth, Dinas Powys and Llandough.
3. The school operates on two sites. The main site is in Penarth and the smaller site is in Dinas Powys. Both sites cater for key stage (KS) 3 pupils, while pupils in KS4 and students in the sixth form are located on the Penarth site. Approximately 20% of pupils come from outside the school's traditional catchment area through parental choice. Thirteen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, a figure below the national average of 16.6%, and a slight increase since the last inspection, when 12% of pupils were entitled.
4. The school has a wide-ranging intake consisting of children from areas of considerable social deprivation to more affluent. Fifteen per cent of pupils come from ethnic backgrounds. The school is a designated centre for children with an exceptionally wide range of special educational needs (SEN), including moderate learning difficulties, physical disabilities and hearing impairment. Eight per cent of pupils come from homes where English is not the first language.
5. The full range of ability is found in the school. The school has identified a number of pupils as gifted and talented.
6. Vocational pathways are being formed with other providers in the area. Since 2004, the school has been a pilot school for the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ). All sixth-form students follow courses that lead to the WBQ Advanced Diploma in addition to their (A) levels. Since 2006, approximately 30 pupils at KS4 have followed courses that will lead to the WBQ at intermediate and foundation level. The school plans to increase this figure from 2007.
7. The school is due to be provided with new accommodation on one site funded by the unitary authority (UA).
8. The headteacher was the only member of the current senior leadership team (SLT) in post at the time of the last inspection. The other members of the team were appointed subsequently.

### The school's priorities and targets

9. The school's aims set out five priorities, to:
  - provide all members of the school with the widest range of educational opportunities in a well-structured, orderly, secure, caring and happy environment;

- maximise the potential of all pupils so that they all have the opportunity to experience success and achieve the highest academic standards of which they are capable;
  - promote a life-long enjoyment of learning, celebrate success, value effort and learn from failure;
  - recognise achievements of all kinds and refuse to accept underachievement;
  - prepare all pupils for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the key skills they will require at work, as citizens and at leisure.
10. Numerical targets are set, that in 2007:
- 63% of pupils should reach at least level 5 in all three subjects combined in national curriculum (NC) assessments at the end of KS3; and
  - 62% of pupils should achieve at least 5 grades A\*-C, and 95% at least 5 grades A\*-G in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination.

## Summary

11. St Cyres is a very good school with a number of outstanding features. It has been successful in creating an inclusive ethos which results in an educational provision of high quality. The introduction of the WBQ has had a positive impact on the whole school in addition to transforming the provision and standards in the sixth form.
12. The outstanding features of the school are seen in the:
- standards of achievement in the WBQ;
  - excellent relationships between teachers and pupils;
  - range of extra-curricular provision;
  - way the school tackles social disadvantage and provides equality of opportunity;
  - support and guidance given to pupils and students, including those with additional learning needs;
  - clear sense of direction and promotion of high standards promoted by the headteacher, SLT, and governing body;
  - arrangements for managing and improving the performance of staff, and
  - effectiveness of school self-evaluation and planning for improvement.
13. Since the last inspection standards have been raised, particularly at 16+ and in the area of teaching and learning. The school is seeking to raise standards even further by a greater consistency of approach to whole-school policy and procedure and by a greater community focus.

### 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 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?	1
6. How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	1
7. How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	2

14. The grades for key questions 1-3 and 5-7 match those of the school in its self-evaluation report. While the school awarded itself grade 2 for key question 4, the inspection team awarded grade 1 because of outstanding features in the care, guidance and support offered to pupils.

### Standards achieved

15. The exceptionally wide range of SEN makes comparisons with other schools difficult. However, results in the NC assessments at the end of KS3 were above local and national averages in 2006. Attainment in English was in line with that estimated based on prior attainment. Attainment in mathematics was slightly higher than estimated. Attainment in science was significantly higher than what was estimated.
16. Girls outperform boys at KS3 in English, and in English, mathematics and science combined.
17. At GCSE, the percentage of pupils the school enters is in line with the average for Wales as a whole, though 5% less than the average for the UA. Pass rates at five or more grades A\*-C are greater than those nationally, though 3% less than those locally. Pass rates at five or more grades A\*-G are in line with those nationally, though 4% less than those locally, reflecting the high numbers of pupils with SEN.
18. Girls outperform boys at KS4.
19. At both key stages, on the basis of recent performance figures, boys underachieve in relation to girls, for several indicators, in comparison with the all Wales figures.
20. Results at A level continue to improve. They exceed local and national averages. In 2006, boys outperformed girls. Boys' results were significantly above local and national figures. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.
21. Results in the WBQ are outstanding. In 2006, the second year of the pilot, 82% of the cohort completed all elements of the qualification compared with 76% nationally, 98% of whom were awarded the advanced diploma, compared with 88% nationally. A very high proportion of students gained accreditation in the six key skill areas.

22. The grades awarded for standards achieved in the six subjects inspected were as follows:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>KS3</b>	<b>KS4</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> form</b>
English	2	2	1
Welsh Second Language	3	2	2
Mathematics	2	2	2
Information Technology	2	1	1
Geography	1	1	1
Physical Education	3	2	2

23. In the 98 lessons observed in the six subjects the following grades were awarded:

<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
15%	61%	19%	5%	0%

24. These grades exceed the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) targets for 2007, that 65% of lessons be graded 1 or 2. They are 3% short of the WAG target for 2007 that 98% of lessons be graded 3 and above. They exceed the grades for all inspections in Wales 2005-2006 in which 11% were graded 1 and 54% were graded 2. They represent a significant improvement since the last inspection when 93% were graded 3 and above and 50% were graded 1 and 2.
25. Pupils have good communication and numeracy skills. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum vary.
26. As they progress through the key stages pupils acquire new knowledge and skills. Most have a good understanding of how well they are progressing and make good progress. Other than in Welsh second language lessons, pupils' and students' bilingual skills are not well developed.
27. Standards among pupils with SEN are good, both in designated classes at KS3 and in mainstream classes at KS4.

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

28. The progress pupils make in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a major strength of the school. They are courteous to one another and to adults and visitors. They have a good attitude to learning.
29. The consistency of pupils' good behaviour is an outstanding feature as is their understanding and respect for the culture and beliefs of others. They reflect well the standards and examples conveyed by staff at all levels.
30. The way that sixth formers respond to the WBQ provision is outstanding. They enjoy very good relationships with staff and develop further their learning skills. They respond well to the opportunities the school provides to work with other partners at this level and to the individual opportunities for involvement in the school's life.
31. Pupils and students are well prepared for Higher Education and employment.

## The quality of education and training

32. The following grades were awarded for teaching in the 98 lessons observed in the six subjects, and in the 44 lessons in all other subjects:

<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
<b>6 subjects</b>	14%	58%	22%	6%	0%
<b>Other subjects</b>	14%	66%	14%	6%	0%
<b>Total</b>	14%	61%	19%	6%	0%

33. Seventy-five percent of lessons were graded 1 and 2 compared to 69% in all inspections in Wales 2005-2006. Ninety-four percent of lessons were graded 3 and above which is in line with the all-Wales figure for the same period.
34. The 14% of lessons judged to have outstanding features is just short of the all Wales figure of 17% for 2005-2006. The six percent of lessons judged to have important shortcomings slightly exceeds the all-Wales figure for the same period.
35. Teachers create a purposeful atmosphere in the classroom. Teachers plan their lessons well. The best lessons use a wide range of methods and have pace and challenge. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and have outstanding features. Assessment has good features.
36. While the size and nature of the sample differs from the last inspection, the proportion of very good or outstanding teaching is much higher than the 50 percent achieved at that time.
37. The school is aware of the relative performance of boys and girls and takes steps to address this issue.
38. In the small number of lessons where there are shortcomings in teaching, they are in the imbalance between teacher's expositions and a sufficient variety of tasks to engage all pupils, and in inconsistent and variable practice in classroom management.
39. The curriculum provided is broadly based and balanced. There are effective links with KS2. Pupils have a wide choice of modern foreign language at KS3 and the opportunity to sit modular science and information technology early at KS4.
40. The introduction of the WBQ has met with considerable success. All sixth-form students follow courses that lead to the qualification at advanced level and approximately 30 pupils at KS4 follow courses that will lead to the WBQ at intermediate and foundation level.
41. The programme of study for personal and social education (PSE) links effectively with the schemes of work for careers education and guidance and work-related education. The school has won several national awards for developments in this area.
42. The support and guidance of pupils have outstanding features. Arrangements are well managed and to very good effect. The school enjoys the confidence of parents and employers, and forms good links with outside agencies. Pupils who transfer from partner primary schools are well looked after and settle in well.

43. The extra-curricular activities and the equality of opportunity provided for all pupils have outstanding features. The learning experiences provided meet the needs of employers and the wider community.
44. Pupils with additional learning needs feel secure and make very good progress.
45. The school promotes effectively very good race relations.
46. However, while all pupils at KS4 follow a course in Welsh as a second language there are shortcomings in the way in which the school promotes bi-lingualism.

### **Leadership and management**

47. There is an inclusive ethos which is understood by all members of the school community. The headteacher's leadership is particularly effective in this respect and he is ably supported by his deputy headteachers and assistant headteachers. The way in which they share ownership of values with all staff and the way in which these values are reflected in the way the school works are outstanding.
48. There is a strong commitment to the WAG priorities and the school works effectively with other providers.
49. The arrangements for setting targets for individuals and teams, providing them with training and support, and monitoring their performance are very effective.
50. Heads of year and heads of department are effective middle managers. They lead their teams well and make sure that school policy is put into practice.
51. The school has very good arrangements to monitor and evaluate its performance. It sets clear priorities and takes effective action to bring about improvement.
52. Governors have a clear understanding of their role and work efficiently through a range of appropriate committees. They are aware of the main challenges the school faces and its priorities in addressing them. Individual governors are linked with subject departments.
53. The school uses its limited resources well and provides good value for money. The budget is well monitored at departmental and whole-school level. While the school has invested heavily in ICT facilities there are still not enough computers to meet a growing demand.
54. The quality of display in the classrooms and around the school is good and makes for a stimulating working environment for pupils and staff. This is in sharp contrast to the important shortcomings in the fabric of the school, which requires a high degree of repair and maintenance.
55. All staff are appropriately qualified and experienced. Performance management arrangements for teaching staff are in line with national requirements. The roles and responsibilities of support staff have been re-defined to good effect, though there is an insufficient number of classroom assistants due to lack of funding.
56. The contact ratio of teaching staff is low because of the need to travel between the two sites. This presents a challenge to the school in terms of the most effective use of resources available to provide the curriculum.

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

57. With regard to the key issues of the previous inspection, the school has made outstanding progress in:
- promoting higher standards by eliminating unsatisfactory work and sharing good practice;
  - developing further the quality and variety of pupils' learning experiences;
  - bringing a more consistent approach to self-evaluation and development planning;
  - improving the quality and consistency of assessment practice; and
  - planning and promoting key skills.
58. The school has made good progress in meeting the statutory requirements in religious education and collective worship and attending to health and safety hazards.

### **Recommendations**

In order to build on current achievement, the school should focus on the following priorities.

- R1. Continue to improve standards and examination results generally.  
R2. Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning.  
R3. Continue to promote opportunities for pupils to use Welsh in school.  
R4. Continue to work with the UA to provide suitable accommodation on one site.

The school's planning already recognises issues identified in these recommendations.

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

### **Standards**

#### **Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?**

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

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

#### **KS3 & KS4**

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

60. Results in NC teachers' assessments at KS3 have improved since the last inspection. In 2006, 67% of pupils reached at least level five in all three subjects combined, compared to 58% nationally. These results are similar to those of the two previous years.

61. Results in all three of the core subjects have improved since the last inspection and remain above national averages.
62. However, while the situation fluctuates in mathematics and science, there is an increasing trend for girls to outperform boys in English.
63. In comparison with schools of similar intake, results for 2006 are between the upper quartile and the median in all three of the core subjects combined and in English. Results are in the upper quartile for mathematics and science.
64. In 2006, at KS3, 73% of pupils gained level five or above in the NC teacher assessment in English, and 81% level five or above in mathematics. In both cases the school's performance was two per cent below target. The school exceeded its target for science, where 90% of pupils gained level 5 or above. The school exceeded its target for passes in all three core subjects combined for girls but failed to meet its target for boys.
65. At KS4, 87% of pupils are entered for five or more GCSEs. This is less than 92% locally but in line with 88% nationally. It also reflects the large proportion of pupils with SEN. The 96% entered for one or more GCSE is in line with local and national figures.
66. On the whole, results in each of the three core subjects combined are in line with those at the last inspection. Forty-one percent of the pupils in 2006 gained passes at grade C and above in each of English, mathematics and science, compared with 44% locally and 40% nationally.
67. In 2006 the percentage of pupils passing with grade C and above in English was 70% compared with 65% locally and 58% nationally. The percentage of pupils gaining grade C and above in mathematics was 58% compared with 56% locally and 50% nationally. The figures for science were 45%, 51%, and 49% respectively.
68. When compared with schools of similar intake results in English and Mathematics lie in the upper quartile. Results for Science, however, lie in the lower quartile.
69. Sixty-two percent of pupils gained five or more grades A\*-C in 2006, compared to 65% locally and 54% nationally. The 2006 pass rates at five or more grades A\*-G were 86%, 90%, and 86% respectively. The average points score per pupil in 2006 was 42 compared with 48 locally and 40 nationally.
70. In comparison with schools of similar intake, results at KS4 in 2006 show that the percentage of pupils passing with five or more grades C and above are above average. In 2006 the percentage of pupils passing with five or more grades G and above was below average.
71. Girls outperform boys at KS4, particularly in English.
72. At both key stages, on the basis of recent performance figures, boys underachieve in relation to girls, for several indicators, in comparison with all-Wales figures.
73. At KS4, the school exceeded by two percent its target that 60% of pupils pass five or more GCSEs at grades A\*-C but failed by six percent its ambitious target that 92% of pupils should pass five or more GCSEs at grades A\*-G. Nor did the

school meet its target that 50% of pupils should pass with grades C or above in each of English, mathematics and science.

74. At both KS3 and KS4 there are good features and no important shortcomings in English and mathematics. In Welsh second language and physical education good features outweigh shortcomings at KS3, while there are good features and no important shortcomings at KS4.
75. In information technology there are good features and no important shortcomings at KS3. At KS4 there are outstanding features.
76. In geography at both KS3 and KS4 there are outstanding features.
77. In the 75 lessons observed in the six subjects inspected at KS3 and KS4, the following grades were awarded.

Key Stage	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
<b>KS3</b>	7%	54%	32%	7%	0%
<b>KS4</b>	26%	56%	12%	6%	0%
<b>KS3 &amp; 4</b>	16%	55%	23%	6%	0%

78. These grades exceed the WAG targets for 2007, that 65% of lessons should be graded 1 or 2 but fall short of the target that 98% should be graded 3 and above. The 6% of lessons judged to have shortcomings in important areas were in Welsh second language at KS3, mathematics at KS3 and KS4, and physical education at KS4.
79. While the size and nature of the sample are different from those of the last inspection, these figures represent a significant improvement on the percentage of lessons judged to have good features and no important shortcomings, but in line with the percentage of lessons judged to have good features that outweigh shortcomings.
80. Pupils' levels of communication have good features and no important shortcomings. Pupils are clear, fluent and confident speakers. They listen well both to teachers and to one another. Pupils write well.
81. Standards in numeracy have good features which outweigh shortcomings. Pupils apply numbers confidently in a variety of contexts and formats.
82. Standards in ICT have improved since the last inspection. Pupils handle files and folders confidently and use data bases, spreadsheets and power point to good effect. Shortcomings in ICT still remain in some areas, particularly in Welsh second language and mathematics.
83. Pupils work well together in pairs and in groups, in creative and problem-solving opportunities. There are outstanding features in this respect in information technology and geography, where pupils collaborate in creating and delivering their presentations.
84. Pupils with SEN make good progress. They are motivated to work hard and complete tasks. They are aware of the key skills and exercise them at a level appropriate to their ability. Many respond well to in-class support and succeed at GCSE level.
85. Bilingual skills have shortcomings at both key stages. While skills are developed through lessons in Welsh as a second language, there is little use of incidental

Welsh in class and throughout the school. At KS4, most pupils are entered for GCSE. Percentage passes exceed those nationally and locally at both grade C and above and grade G and above.

### **Their progress in learning**

86. In English and mathematics, pupils make good progress at both key stages.
87. While pupils make good progress in information technology at both key stages, pupils' progress in KS4 is outstanding. Pupils make outstanding progress in geography at both KS3 and KS4.
88. Where pupils' progress is outstanding they have a strong re-call of prior learning, are able to extract information from a variety of sources, and have a secure knowledge and understanding of complex issues.
89. Pupils' progress in Welsh second language and physical education varies. In classes where pupils benefit from well-planned lessons, involving a variety of tasks, they show a growing knowledge and understanding of the subject. In the minority of classes where lesson planning is poor, and the pace of lessons is slow, pupils' progress has shortcomings.
90. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress both in KS3 and in KS4. They respond well to the provision of small discrete tasks, clear guidance, and frequent verbal assessment. Pupils with support in English as an additional language make good progress.

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

91. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and work hard in lessons, engaging with the task in hand. Across both key stages, pupils are courteous and polite, open and friendly. The praise and support, which the school offers, motivate pupils to give of their best.
92. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and makes an important contribution to the standards they achieve in their learning.
93. Pupils are well behaved in and around the school, understanding what is expected of them and responding positively to the considerate and courteous way teachers and support staff relate to them. Pupils report that there are very few incidents of bullying and aggressive behaviour. The way able-bodied pupils support pupils with physical disabilities is exemplary.
94. The overall attendance rate for the three terms in 2006 was 92.3%, slightly below the WAG target of 93%. On the whole, levels of punctuality at the school at the start of the day and the start of lessons are good.
95. The progress pupils make in their moral, social, cultural and wider development is good with some outstanding features. They respond positively to the consistent way the school praises, rewards, and publicly values pupils' work.
96. While the curriculum, assemblies, and collective worship contribute to pupils' spiritual development, pupils also show respect for the diversity of belief, attitude and tradition present, both within the school itself and in society at large.
97. Most pupils take part in sport, in a range of clubs in subjects across the curriculum, and in visits. The way in which the school raises funds for local and national charities is outstanding.

98. Careers guidance and work-related education are of good quality. They prepare pupils well for the world of work and give them positive attitudes towards life-long learning.

### **Sixth form**

#### **Students' success in attaining agreed learning goals**

99. Results in the WBQ are outstanding. In 2006, the second year of the pilot, 82% of the cohort completed all elements of the qualification compared with 76% nationally, 98% of whom were awarded the advanced diploma, compared with 88% nationally. A very high proportion of students gained accreditation in the six key skill areas.
100. Results at A level continue to improve. They exceed local and national averages. An increasing number of students gain grade A at Advanced Supplementary (AS) and A2 levels. In 2006, boys outperformed girls both at grades A-C and A-E. Boys' results were significantly above local and national figures. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.
101. Entry rates at A Level have increased since 2000. In 2006, 109 students were entered for 2 or more A Level examinations, 95% of whom gained passes at grades A-E and 84% of whom gained passes at grades A-C. The average points score for 2006 was 27. This compares favourably with the performance at the last inspection, where the figures for 2000 were 84, 96% and 65% respectively, and where the average points score was 18.
102. Of the six subjects inspected, English, information technology, and geography were judged to be good with outstanding features. In Welsh second language, mathematics and physical education standards were judged to be good and to have no important shortcomings.
103. This represents an improvement in standards since the last inspection particularly in English, Welsh second language, geography and physical education.
104. The grades awarded for the 23 lessons observed in the sixth form were:
- | <b>Grade 1</b> | <b>Grade 2</b> | <b>Grade 3</b> | <b>Grade 4</b> | <b>Grade 5</b> |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 13%            | 83%            | 4%             | 0%             | 0%             |
105. These figures show that 96% of lessons observed were judged to have good features and no important shortcomings, including 13% with outstanding features.
106. While the size and nature of the sample are different from the last inspection, these figures represent a significant improvement since 2001 when 66% of lessons observed were judged to have been good or very good.
107. Students speak and listen well to the teacher and each other. They pose probing questions and articulate their views with confidence and clarity. They engage in problem-solving activity and use information and communication technology well to support their research and present their work. They write well, use number effectively, and work very well in pairs and in groups.
108. Their bilingual skills are not well developed.

### **Their progress in learning**

109. Students benefit from a broad range of AS and A2 courses including some vocationally-based courses. In addition to the provision for key skills, the WBQ incorporates units of study on work-related education, PSE, and Wales, Europe and the World. A significant proportion of students completes the qualification successfully and pass rates exceed the average for Wales.
110. Sixth-form students have a good understanding of how well they are doing. Their work is marked and commented upon in detail and targets for improvement are clearly set.
111. The school provides very good support to all sixth formers, particularly to those who wish to proceed to Higher Education. Since the introduction of the WBQ a greater proportion of sixth-form students have secured university places of first choice.

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

112. Sixth-form students develop very good personal, social and learning skills. They are confident and articulate young adults who relate well to pupils, their peers, teachers and other adults in the school.
113. They have good levels of attendance and punctuality.
114. They enjoy very good relationships with staff and develop a sense of maturity and independence as they respond to the many opportunities they have to take a leading role in the school.
115. They take seriously their responsibility for supporting younger pupils.
116. Sixth-form students have an appropriate programme of work-related education that enables them to become mature young people who are aware of, and respond to, the needs of others.

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

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

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

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

#### **KS3 and KS4**

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

118. In the 98 lessons observed in the six subjects inspected and the 44 lessons observed in other subjects, the following grades were awarded:

	<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
<b>6 subjects</b>	14%	58%	22%	6%	0%
<b>Other lessons</b>	14%	66%	14%	6%	0%
<b>Total</b>	14%	61%	19%	6%	0%

119. These grades compare favourably with those for all inspections in Wales in 2005-6, with teaching in 75% lessons achieving grades 1 or 2, compared with 69% across Wales.

120. While the size and nature of the sample differ from those of the last inspection the proportion of very good or outstanding teaching is much higher than the 50% achieved at that time.
121. An outstanding feature of teaching and learning across the school is the mutual respect and courtesy that underpins both processes. A good relationship between teachers and pupils enhances the effectiveness of innovative teaching that can be observed in several subject areas.
122. There are many good features in the quality of teaching, which reflect the determined effort made by the school to reduce the high incidence of didactic teaching observed in the last inspection. At the centre of developments in this area is a teaching and learning working party, which has effectively identified and disseminated good practice.
123. The school is aware of the relative performance of boys and girls and takes steps to address this issue.
124. The large majority of observed lessons was well planned and well organized. Typically, lessons follow a common format, with engaging introductions and a good variety of activities. Teaching promotes the full range of key skills and independent learning.
125. Teaching that challenges learners was observed in all subjects, but most consistently in English and geography.
126. There is very good provision for pupils with physical disabilities.
127. While pupils with SEN benefit from the effective support provided by classroom assistants, pupils of average to below average ability in mainstream classes lack that provision.
128. The school has a policy for promoting *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* in subject areas and through the WBQ. While a firm foundation has been set for the promotion of bilingualism in the form of various musical and cultural events, and Welsh-speaking staff are encouraged to speak Welsh to pupils, there are shortcomings in the way incidental Welsh is promoted.
129. In the small minority of lessons where there were shortcomings, there was a lack of pace and challenge, too much direction by teachers, and an inappropriate match between the work provided and pupils' needs and abilities.
130. The rigour of assessment and its use in planning and improving learning.
131. Teachers make good use of assessment data to monitor pupils' progress. Pupils in need of support are identified and allocated to appropriate senior staff for additional help.
132. There is good practice in the collection, analysis and use of data for monitoring pupils' progress. The system is very well managed, is accessible, and easy to use.
133. All departments feed data from common assessment tasks into the system at least twice a year, so that both subject and pastoral teachers have, as a minimum, a 'snapshot' of how well each pupil is performing in relation to pre-set targets or predictive grades. Most departments, however, make greater use of

the system by entering more assessment data, thus gaining a more precise picture of progression in pupils' performance.

134. There is evidence of a sound general understanding of both the theory and practice of formative assessment. This is underpinned by a very rigorous scrutiny of pupils' books undertaken on a rolling programme by senior and other staff. Following this, a written report is provided for each department. Written responses are required from departments in the form of action plans which are, in turn, monitored.
135. Assessment for learning is well embedded in week-to-week classroom practice in the large majority of subject areas.
136. Pupils' self-assessment and peer-assessment can be observed, in one form or another, in most lessons. Where there is best practice, for example in English and geography, it contributes to the development of pupils' ability to solve problems and to their understanding of what they need to do to improve their own work.
137. The school meets statutory requirements for assessment and fulfils the regulations of examination boards.
138. The quality of arrangements for reporting pupils' progress to parents is very good. The rigour of teachers' commentary, indicating precise strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance and ways of improving their work, is of a high quality.
139. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of assessment since the last inspection. The common assessment tasks that form the basis of consistent assessment are well embedded.
140. However, in a small minority of subjects, there is still variation and inconsistency in the frequency and quality of marking, and in the tracking of pupils' performance.

### **Sixth form**

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

141. In the 23 lessons observed in the six subjects, and the seven lessons observed in other subjects, the grades awarded for teaching and learning were:

	<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
<b>6 Subjects</b>	4%	87%	9%	0%	0%
<b>Other subjects</b>	14%	86%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Total</b>	7%	87%	7%	0%	0%

142. An outstanding feature of teaching in the sixth form is the high level of subject knowledge displayed by teachers.
143. The WBQ is well organized, well taught, and enables a larger than usual proportion of sixth-form students to develop the characteristics of independent learners.
144. Where teaching has good features, there is clarity of direction, briskness of pace, and good use of resources. There is challenging use of the target language in Welsh second language, an interesting use of current events in

information technology, and a clear explanation and modelling of activities in geography.

145. In the small minority of lessons where there were shortcomings there was overlong exposition by teachers and a narrow range of teaching strategies.

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

146. The generally good quality of assessment practice observed elsewhere in the school is even more evident in the sixth form.
147. The quality of marking and teacher annotation is consistently informative. There is very good practice evident in English and geography. Less effective practice was observed in mathematics.
148. The WBQ has impacted on assessment in the sixth form in two important respects. First of all, it has strengthened the position of key skills and their assessment at A level. Secondly, it has resulted in the effective self-assessment and peer-assessment procedures observed in many A level lessons.
149. A strong feature of assessment at 16+ is the system of regular interviews organized by the head of sixth form. Each student is entitled to three half-hour sessions per term, at which his/her welfare and general progress are discussed and his/her progress with WBQ and other coursework is closely monitored.

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

<b>Grade 2: Good with no important shortcomings</b>
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150. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.

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

151. The curriculum is broad and balanced, flexible and coherent, and provides progression between key stages.
152. The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of learning experiences that meets their needs and interests. Pupils and students are provided with experiences that include community service, accreditation of key skills, and work experience. At KS3, the more able pupils have the opportunity to study two modern foreign languages.
153. At KS4, the curriculum is organised and offered, in terms of the Learning Pathways structure, to meet flexibly the needs of individual pupils, including those who benefit from following a more vocationally-based programme on-site or at a local college. There is a broad range of courses in ICT available to all pupils.
154. At KS4 the introduction of a pilot WBQ programme at foundation and intermediate levels enhances the learning opportunities of an appropriate group of pupils.
155. In the sixth form the WBQ provides a well-integrated and coherent programme for all students. This provision is outstanding.

156. However, the timetable arrangements at KS3 have a negative impact on the quality of pupils' learning experiences. Two sites requires there to be a number of split classes and teaching groups in excess of thirty pupils.
157. The planning and delivery of key skills have been enhanced by the experience of the WBQ. Most subject departments have made significant strides in developing communication, numeracy, information and communication technology and the wider key skills in their teaching and learning programmes. All sixth-form students are provided with the opportunity to obtain accreditation in all six key skill areas. The school has gained the Basic Skills Quality Mark.
158. Arrangements for the monitoring of key skills, including the wider key skills in KS3 and KS4, remain a priority for development as the curriculum is reviewed.
159. There is an extensive range of extra-curricular activities which plays a significant role in promoting the pupils' personal and social development. A range of opportunities is provided in sport, music, drama, theatre trips, visits abroad, fund-raising, community service, charity work, World Challenge, and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.
160. The support of community charitable work is outstanding. An active, pupil-led charity committee has raised in excess of £13,000 for local and national charities over the past two years. The school has forged a very good formal partnership with Ty Hafan, a local children's hospice.
161. The school is an orderly community where the vast majority of pupils shows a high level of respect for adults and peers. They display a clear sense of right and wrong. They work well together with positive relationships contributing to the achievement of high standards in most aspects of school life. Their appreciation of different cultures is well promoted through the subject areas and the extensive programme of extra-curricular activities.
162. The curriculum promotes effectively pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
163. Strong, effective collaboration with parents and a local community link, which permeate all aspects of the teaching and learning programme enrich pupils' learning experiences.
164. There are effective local partnerships with partner primary schools where there are curriculum links, joint staff training and pastoral arrangements that ensure purposeful progression and continuity between KS2 and KS3.
165. In addition there are beneficial links with a local college, higher education establishments and neighbouring special schools.
166. All statutory requirements in terms of the content and delivery of the curriculum including the daily act of corporate worship are met.

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

167. The careers education and guidance and work related education programme is well planned and delivered effectively through the PSE curriculum. Both follow the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority for Wales (ACCAC) guidelines. All pupils and students are trained to use the Careers Wales on-line website.

168. There are good links with employers, especially in the delivery of a two-week work-experience programme in Y10. The Careers Wales service makes a substantial contribution to the arrangements for contact with the world of work and pupils' guidance. A number of curricular areas have forged very good links with appropriate specialist companies in the local area. These experiences provide pupils with a good understanding of the world of work.
169. Aspects of sustainability and global citizenship have been successfully developed. There is an awareness of the principles of sustainable development and global citizenship across all subject areas.
170. The school sells fair-trade products and is involved in the 'safe routes to school' project. The school's promotion of healthy eating has attracted a number of local and national awards.
171. The school promotes recycling and conservation. Developments are pupil led and the school has achieved a national award.
172. Pupils in KS3 and KS4 are effectively introduced to aspects of enterprise in a small number of carefully planned units in Y7 and Y9 within the PSE scheme of work and the Dynamo project. Entrepreneurial activities in the sixth form are promoted successfully within elements of the WBQ.
173. The school has a policy for promoting *Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig* in subject areas and through the WBQ. Pupils' bilingual competence is encouraged by a number of activities such as eisteddfodau, visits to Llangrannog and Glanllyn, Urdd activities and a limited use of Welsh in assemblies.
174. However, there are shortcomings in the way bilingualism is promoted. There are no planned opportunities for pupils to use Welsh outside the formal Welsh lessons and signage and posters are not consistently bilingual. The comprehensive policy statement on bilingualism has not been strongly promoted in practice.
175. The school is a totally inclusive organisation where pupils of all ability levels, ethnic background and disability have full access to all areas of the curriculum. They are encouraged to achieve success and fully participate in all aspects of school life.
176. The breadth and balance of the curriculum, the development of the 14-19 strategies, the introduction of the WBQ, particularly the key skills element, the careers and work-related education and the movement towards community-focused school status ensure that pupils receive the appropriate experiences to lay the foundation for life-long learning.

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

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features</b>
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177. This is one grade higher than the school's self-evaluation grade because the inspection team judged some of the good features identified by the school to be outstanding.
178. There are outstanding features in the way in which the school:
- manages the care arrangements;

- identifies pupils' individual needs;
- supports disabled learners;
- provides for pupils with SEN;
- promotes racial equality, and
- responds to all forms of oppressive behaviour.

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

179. The provision made to support heads of year is outstanding. The provision of administrative assistants enables them to devote more of their time and efforts to the monitoring and support of their pupils. The continually staffed pastoral offices mean that issues are responded to quickly and parents have easy access to the pastoral support teams. The quality of care, support and guidance is outstanding.
180. The school's youth worker provides very good support for pupils with social and behavioural problems. The school makes good use of a wide range of specialist, outside services.
181. The school provides impartial advice of good quality that enables pupils to make informed choices when they pass from KS3 into KS4 and also into the sixth form.
182. Pupils settle quickly and happily into their new school. There is a well-organised transition programme and good links with partner primary schools. The transfer of pupils from Dinas Powys to the main school site at the beginning of Y10 is helped by an induction day into KS4. The pastoral staff closely monitors pupils in the few weeks after transfer and responds sympathetically to any problems.
183. Heads of year monitor pupils' attitudes, academic performance and behaviour in great detail. They identify potential problems and provide appropriate programmes of remedial action. They provide considerable individual support and guidance.
184. Students studying for the WBQ receive very good support. Initial guidance about subject choice and induction into the sixth form are both good. The learning coaches monitor progress by regular tutorials and provide support to keep students on track. Regular reports keep parents well informed about progress.
185. There are good procedures for monitoring attendance. Teamwork between the attendance office, the Education Welfare Officer and heads of year ensures that the school investigates and both challenges and supports pupils with inadequate attendance records.
186. There is an effective programme of careers education and guidance which is integrated with the PSE programme. It meets the requirements of the ACCAC framework and makes very good use of professional support from Careers Wales.
187. The school has good site security and monitors health and safety issues effectively. There is good first-aid provision.
188. The school council meets regularly and plays a prominent role in the life of the school. Representatives of the council contribute to the staff interview process. Two senior members sit on the school governing body.

189. Child protection procedures are effective and well understood by all staff. They comply fully with statutory requirements.

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

190. Overall provision for pupils with SEN is good with some outstanding features. The school is designated by the UA as a school suitable for pupils with physical disabilities and hearing impairment. Consequently, SEN has a high profile within the school.
191. The wide range of SEN provision is very effectively administered by the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) together with the SEN team. Members of staff with delegated responsibility for managing provision for physically disabled and hearing impaired pupils are extremely effective and provision for these pupils is very good.
192. The school has a detailed SEN policy which reflects the guidance contained in the Code of Practice of Wales. Pupils in receipt of statements of SEN receive their legal entitlement as outlined in their statements. Statements are reviewed annually with parents and relevant professional specialists invited to the review meetings. Transitional plans are drafted in the Y9 review meetings. All statutory requirements with regard to statements are met.
193. Primary school liaison is very good, with the SENCO, or assistant SENCO, visiting partner primary schools and attending annual review meetings for Y5 and Y6. On admission, pupils are screened using a range of standardised tests.
194. Individual education plans (IEPs) are in place for all pupils who require them and targets are glued into pupils' exercise books so that they, and all staff, are constantly aware of them. However targets tend to be broad, lack specific detail, and do not specify success criteria. IEPs are reviewed twice a year, with parents invited to one of the review meetings.
195. Teams of Learning Support Assistants provide very effective support in lessons. Support for hearing impaired pupils is enhanced by the significant contribution of the language facilitator/communicator whose work with one profoundly deaf pupil is outstanding. Provision for pupils with physical disabilities is very good and they are fully included in the life of the school.
196. Learning Support Assistants write individual reports on pupils' progress each lesson; these are monitored by appropriate SEN personnel, form tutors and heads of year. Data on standards of pupils' literacy are available on the school's intranet, for all members of staff to access. Pupils are tested prior to, and after, each intervention in order to evaluate its efficacy. All assessments are tracked by heads of year.
197. Liaison with subject departments is good. Each subject department has a SEN representative and regular meetings are held to discuss aspects of provision such as differentiation.
198. The school continues to develop provision for more able and talented pupils. While the main focus of provision has been through extra-curricular activities, the school now provides programmes of extension and enrichment work.

199. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good, but, whilst tracking procedures of individual pupils are sound, there is no analysis of achievement nor attainment, neither by ethnicity, nor by ethnic gender.
200. The support offered by the Youth Worker, in conjunction with that offered by the Pupil Support Centre, in preventing pupils from being excluded is outstanding. Pupils, who otherwise would have been excluded, are on site, attending most lessons and are entered for external examinations.

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

201. The extent to which the school has created a climate in which racial equality is promoted is outstanding. The school complies fully with race relations legislation. Racial incidents are extremely rare, and when they do occur they are carefully recorded. The log shows that these incidents have been effectively and robustly dealt with.
202. The ways in which the school responds to all forms of oppressive behaviour is extremely effective. Pupils have contributed to the design of the procedures for dealing with bullying and Y9 pupils and Y12 students have been trained to support younger pupils. All pupils report that they feel safe and are happy to seek help.
203. The school makes exceptional provision for disabled learners. They are well integrated into school life. This is a significant strength of the school. There is an accessibility plan and a Disability Equality Scheme.
204. The school recognises the diversity of backgrounds within its catchment by close links with partner primary schools. It is successful in creating a positive, inclusive atmosphere where all groups of pupils are well integrated into school life.
205. The school ensures that boys and girls have equal opportunities at the school. There is no stereotyping in pupils' choice of subjects.
206. The school has been successful in creating a climate that encourages good race relations. The school complies fully with race relations legislation.
207. The school provides appropriate opportunities during assemblies and religious education lessons for pupils to understand and value different cultures.

## **Leadership and management**

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

#### **Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

208. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade. The outstanding features are the:
- clear direction the headteacher gives to the school;
  - way in which the school's values are understood by all staff;
  - strength of the senior leadership team;
  - way in which the school manages and improves the performance of staff; and
  - strategic direction set by the governing body.

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

209. The headteacher gives a clear lead by his personal example and by the priorities set out in the school development plan (SDP). His outstanding leadership gives the school a clear sense of direction. There has been a transformation in the ethos of the school since the time of the last inspection. This is seen particularly, though not exclusively, in the way the headteacher has led and managed the introduction of the WBQ.
210. The aims of the school are understood by all and have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The school seeks to provide an education that is wholly inclusive and seeks to develop an ethos which values the effort and achievement of all.
211. The aims and values of the school are made explicit when communicated orally, in writing, and in day-to-day practice. All members of staff are aware of the promotion of equality for all pupils. This is reflected in the way the school includes all pupils and reviews its policy and procedure.
212. Each member of the senior leadership team has a clearly defined role and they work well together. Each one is aligned with a number of departments where they support developments in curricular planning, delivery, and monitoring.
213. A high quality of leadership and management is present in the vast majority of subject departments where the aims and values of the school are effectively promoted by a high quality of planning.
214. The workforce re-modelling, for the allocation of teaching and learning responsibilities, has been successfully introduced. One particularly successful innovation has been the provision of administrative support for the heads of year which has enabled them to develop their role as leaders of learning and supporters of pupils' progress.
215. The school takes clear account of the WAG priorities. Social inclusion is an outstanding feature of the school's provision. Pupils have been motivated to remain committed to education beyond the age of 16. Vocationally-based courses are being developed and effective links have been made with providers of education and training in the community.
216. The PSE programme is in the process of revision and is well planned. Healthy living and healthy eating are strong priorities. Transition arrangements have been strengthened, and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education or employment, through effective careers and work-related education.
217. The promotion of bilingualism is the only WAG target that is not embedded in practice.
218. Staff are consulted on the formulation of school policy and procedures. The school sets an appropriate range of targets for its performance on the basis of a careful analysis of data drawn both from examination results and NC assessments and from standardised tests and teachers' own assessments. These targets are effectively shared and monitored.

### **The extent to which governors meet their responsibilities**

219. The governing body supports the headteacher and work of the school. Governors carry out their work through an appropriate range of committees as well as meeting regularly as a full governing body. Several governors have long experience in the role, while others have been appointed recently.
220. Governors work well with the UA on priorities for the school's development. They are closely involved in plans to improve the quality of the accommodation in the short term as well as in regard to the long-term building project of integrating the Dinas Powys and Penarth sites.
221. Governors are also aware of their responsibility to monitor and review the quality of the school's provision. As a full governing body and through their various committees, governors receive regular reports from the headteacher that enable them to discuss his analyses of performance and the action the school proposes to take in response.
222. The governing body fully meets regulatory and legal requirements.

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

<b>Grade 1: Good with outstanding features.</b>
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223. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.
224. The outstanding features are the:
- culture of self-evaluation which permeates the school;
  - comprehensive self-evaluation procedures;
  - way the school seeks the views of interested parties; and
  - effectiveness of planning for improvement.

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

225. The clear view of the strengths and shortcomings of the school present at the time of the last inspection has now an even sharper focus. The school's self-evaluation report clearly outlines the school's strengths and areas for development. Its grades matched those of inspectors in all key questions, except for key question four, where inspectors judged the care, support and guidance for pupils and students to have outstanding features.
226. Middle managers are more fully involved in arrangements and the teamwork which characterises the process extends throughout the school. Increasingly more staff take on responsibility for delegated areas, sharing, as necessary, information about individual, departmental and whole-school performance.
227. The self-evaluation policy, documentation and practices result in a well-planned, rigorous and time-tabled annual cycle. This incorporates regular faculty and departmental reviews, individual performance reviews and consequent action plans. Targets and priorities are regularly refined as a continuous process.
228. Both the whole-school and departmental self-evaluation reports address the seven key questions. They use a broad range of evidence, including classroom

observations, analysis of performance data, feedback from examination boards and evidence from external perspectives. This ensures accurate identification of areas of strength and further development.

229. The school seeks the views of interested parties to an outstanding degree. The school council has a prominent role and pupils are involved in self-assessment. Parents and members of the community are extensively consulted.
230. The self-evaluation process involves all staff in a range of groups and working parties led by senior and middle managers. In consequence there is a very strong sense of understanding and ownership by staff of the priorities, targets and outcomes.
231. In a very small minority of departments, self-evaluation is less well developed and less widely shared. Shortcomings are accurately identified in mathematics, Welsh second language and physical education but information is not then consistently used in order to address issues as efficiently as possible.

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

232. Leaders and managers at the school set clear priorities to bring about improvement. The school's strategic planning processes are very well implemented and involve all staff.
233. The focus is always on improving standards, with frequent monitoring of teaching and learning. There is clear feedback at all levels as to how performance can be improved. This regularly leads to well-matched in-service training, itself thoroughly evaluated for effectiveness, with benefits being shared throughout the school.
234. The priorities identified at whole-school and departmental levels are relevant to fulfil the aims, objectives and vision of the school.
235. With very few exceptions, plans are carefully costed and, responsibilities clearly allocated. Success criteria and realistic timescales are sharply defined.
236. A measurable impact of this process has been the significant improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection.
237. The school has acquired a number of quality awards such as the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Careers Wales Quality Award and the Welsh Secondary Schools' Association curriculum awards for design technology and WBQ.
238. The school has made outstanding progress in the key issues for action raised in the last inspection. These include:
- promoting higher standards by eliminating unsatisfactory work and sharing good practice;
  - developing further the quality and variety of pupils' learning experiences;
  - bringing a more consistent approach to self-evaluation and development planning;
  - improving the quality and consistency of assessment practice; and
  - planning and promoting key skills.
239. The school has made good progress in meeting the statutory requirements in religious education and collective worship and attending to health and safety hazards.

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

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

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

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

241. There are sufficient, qualified specialist teachers, who are supported in their work by a substantial number of effective classroom assistants, administrative and clerical staff. Administrative staff are effectively line managed by the director of administration, who is a member of the SLT.
242. Departmental textbook and equipment levels have significantly improved since the time of the last inspection. Resource planning is a feature of development plans and the budget reflects the school's priorities at any point in time. Currently the school is spending 3.6% of its budget on classroom materials and servicing ICT leases.
243. Significant improvements have occurred in the number of ICT suites and the amount of staff training provided. Developments have been well planned and the school development plan reflects future aspirations. There is pressure upon the many ICT suites and some departments find access difficult at specific times. The school website and intranet are at an early stage of development.
244. The learning resource centre (LRC) on the Penarth site is very well managed. The two LRC assistants have established a vibrant learning environment which is extremely well used. It is open before school, at break, at the lunch periods and after school. An SLT member takes line management responsibility.
245. The management of the accommodation is good and this covers up some of the inadequacies in the plant. There is a rolling programme of repair, refurbishment and improvement, which is very effectively delivered by the site manager and his team. There is little litter or graffiti.
246. The design and technology block is of good quality and supports the learning process. Two new demountable classrooms are ready for use.
247. However, there are some shortcomings in the provision of resources and accommodation.
248. The school is able to employ very few learning assistant posts for those pupils who are challenging and who require focused support in the mainstream.
249. There is an urgent need to redevelop the LRC on the Dinas Powys site. This is recognised in the SDP and has been budgeted for in the current financial year.
250. The design of most of the buildings, with regard to classroom layout, is extremely poor. The small size of many classrooms is a major cause for concern and inappropriate for modern day needs. The school is able to overcome some of these inadequacies by skilful timetabling, internal improvement programmes and by pupils being prepared to make the best use of what there is.
251. Toilet provision for both pupils and staff is totally inadequate on the Penarth site. Hygiene standards in two out of the three boys' toilet blocks are below

acceptable levels and pupils have little respect for these substandard facilities. Provision of toilet facilities for staff is inadequate on the Dinas Powys site. Toilets are checked by the site superintendents several times a day. Repairs are carried out at regular intervals.

252. Changing facilities on the Penarth site for girls and boys are sub-standard and un-hygienic because of damp, flaking paint and dirt.
253. The split-site nature of the school is costly in terms of duplicate curricular provision. Despite very effective timetabling this results in a large number of shared classes at KS3, the necessity to subsidise KS3 at the expense of KS4, and a low teacher contact ratio of 73% as a result of the need for staff travelling time between sites.
254. There is additional cost in the maintenance of buildings and grounds on two sites. The headteacher and governors have presented an extremely strong case to the local authority to move the school to one site and this is scheduled for 2009/10.

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

255. The school manages staff absence well and absence rates are low. A few cases of long-term staff absence have resulted in greater demands being placed upon the budget and, in some instances, replacement staff have been difficult to find.
256. The curriculum is well thought out supporting a wide variety of abilities and needs. The WBQ at post-16 level has had a positive impact upon standards. It is well resourced in time, accommodation and staffing. Sixth-form curricular provision is financed by the post-16 funding mechanism and by the additional sum made available through the Welsh Joint Education Committee. It gives very good value for money.
257. Since the time of the last inspection there has been a widening of the curriculum at KS4. This includes some provision for vocational courses both on site and in partnership with Barry College. It also includes the start of a WBQ pilot in Y10.
258. St Cyres is an inclusive school, with a wide range of pupils and pupils' needs. Pupils who have a physical disability, hearing or sight impairment are well catered for with additional and effective specialist support.
259. Continuous professional development (CPD) is an outstanding feature and involves all staff, both teaching and non-teaching. Needs are highlighted at the planning stage and sums set aside through the SDP. Performance management informs the process for the further training of staff. General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW) funding is heavily and effectively used to support the process. Newly-qualified teachers and teachers in their early professional development are well looked after. There is an after school hours' menu of courses from which staff can choose. All members of the SLT run in-service training.
260. Workforce re-modelling and re-structuring have been sensibly and sensitively introduced, through effective consultation and strong staff support. Teachers have been freed up with planning, preparation and assessment time, absence cover arrangements and gained time. This latter category has been fed back into departmental planning. Restructuring is being phased in and the headteacher's experience and care is evident in ensuring that the changes meet the school's

needs, whilst staying within budget. Governors have played an active role in the process.

261. All staff are criminal record bureau (CRB) checked.
262. Governors are extremely well informed, act as critical friends and play an important function in the strategic direction that the school is taking. Many governors, and particularly the chairperson, are frequently in school.
263. The budget is carefully set reflecting the school's priorities. It is tracked and its impact evaluated. Governors play a full part in the process. Audit gives the school praise for its systems and checks. The high quality management of the resource base ensures that the school gives very good value for money.
264. However, there are some shortcomings. The school receives minimal levels of funding compared to many others across Wales, which causes it difficulty. The split-site nature is a substantial drain on resources.

## **Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning**

### **English**

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

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

#### **KS3**

##### **Good features**

265. Most pupils achieve good standards in their knowledge, understanding and skills. The most able pupils achieve very good standards.
266. Most pupils achieve agreed learning targets and goals in class. Pupils develop their reading skills, particularly at KS3 through the use of wider reading time at the beginning of each lesson.
267. Pupils reach good or very good standards in reading, listening and speaking, both informally and formally. They write well.
268. Pupils gain new knowledge and skills in each lesson, develop ideas and have the opportunity to test out their developing knowledge with their peers.
269. Pupils develop a secure awareness and understanding of narrative and poetry. They develop skills of researching text for specific information and extract appropriate quotes to illustrate and support their arguments.
270. Pupils develop their writing skills. They develop an appropriately wide vocabulary to enable them to describe people, events and their feelings.
271. Pupils with SEN achieve good standards of spelling and write well and at length with support.

##### **Shortcomings**

272. There are no important shortcomings.

## **KS4**

### **Good features**

273. Pupils make good progress in English language and literature. GCSE results are improving, with more pupils gaining a grade A\*-C in GCSE English literature.
274. Pupils develop further their reading skills and are able to understand texts of increasing complexity and variety. They are able to read accurately and fluently a variety of texts. They are able to understand implicit as well as explicit meaning in text.
275. Pupils speak clearly and confidently, they listen purposefully to one another and their teachers. They have a good command of vocabulary and use appropriate expression. They are able to maintain a discussion and summarise one another's views and feelings.
276. Pupils write well. They develop skills of descriptive writing and write in detail for a variety of purposes and audiences. They develop good standards of persuasive writing and can set out an argument and support it. Pupils draft and re-draft their work to good effect.
277. Pupils with SEN achieve well.

### **Shortcomings**

278. There are no important shortcomings.

## **Sixth form: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features**

### **Outstanding features**

279. The range and quality of students' written work are sophisticated. Students display a grasp of a range of registers for a variety of literary and non-literary purposes.
280. Students are clear about what they must do to improve. They revise and re-draft their writing to very good effect.

### **Good features**

281. Students achieve well or very well in the range of courses offered by the department. They co-operate well with one another and with their teachers. They take an active part in class discussion and demonstrate a clear understanding of the themes, plots and characters of set texts.
282. Students read a wide range of texts and materials in literature, language and media studies and demonstrate very good skills of interpretation. They are able to recognise and appreciate a variety of linguistic and literary techniques.
283. They have good subject knowledge, are confident speakers and can discuss sophisticated themes and concepts, justifying their responses through a good understanding of a range of texts and materials.
284. Students show a good understanding of examination requirements and assessment criteria.

### **Shortcomings**

285. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Welsh second language</b>
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**Key Stage 3: Grade 3 - Good features outweigh shortcomings**

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

**KS3**

**Good features**

- 286. Pupils listen well in class and respond well using their topic workbooks.
- 287. Most pupils are able to ask an appropriate range of questions in pair work. Pupils' oral responses are usually correct.
- 288. More able pupils provide mature, extended oral answers. Their personal writing is detailed, correct, and well presented. This is outstanding practice.
- 289. Some Y7 pupils improve their oral and reading comprehension skills effectively by singing language patterns in class and assembly and by completing a variety of pupil-friendly reading comprehension tasks.
- 290. Most pupils can write full sentences and paragraphs on their summer holidays and school uniform. Spelling and punctuation are good.

**Shortcomings**

- 291. A small minority of pupils across the key stage lacks confidence in speaking and is not able to conduct brief conversations without teachers' support.
- 292. A small minority of pupils do not use the correct sentence patterns to answer questions in Welsh.
- 293. A small minority of middle and lower ability pupils in Y9 has not made sufficient progress across the key stage in their oral and writing skills.

**KS 4**

**Good features**

- 294. Most pupils' listening skills are good. Their listening comprehension tasks are completed correctly.
- 295. Pupils read a good range of topic-related vocabulary and sentence patterns clearly and correctly. They show a good understanding.
- 296. Most pupils can write correct sentences and paragraphs on a range of GCSE themes.
- 297. Abler pupils' extended writing is consistently good. They express and justify their opinions on the benefits of mobile phones, the timing of school examinations and reach balanced conclusions using a good range of language structures. This is outstanding practice.
- 298. Oral responses, within topic areas, are mostly correct and many abler pupils can interact well in pairs and groups, using appropriate language to agree or disagree with others.

**Shortcomings**

- 299. A small minority of lower ability pupils, mainly boys, does not provide sufficiently varied oral or written responses and some recall of previous language is incorrect.

300. In some cases, written work is poorly presented and some basic language structures are incorrect.

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

#### **Good features**

301. Students' listening skills are developing well and they display a sound understanding of different language registers.
302. Students read and understand a range of literary and factual texts and are developing their literacy criticism skills.
303. Students are developing a good understanding of the formal written language and can translate a good range of language structures and explain grammar rules from previous examination papers.
304. Students can provide background information on the poetry they have studied and their oral responses are clear and quite extended.
305. Y13 students can analyse prose texts quite confidently, using mature appropriate language and style.

#### **Shortcomings**

306. Oral responses are sometimes not suitably extended or varied.
307. In some written tasks there are basic errors in sentence structures.

<b>Mathematics</b>
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### **Key Stage 3: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings**

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

#### **KS3**

#### **Good features**

308. Pupils of all abilities make good progress over the key stage and achieve good standards in their work.
309. Pupils of lower ability in Y8 have a good understanding of probability. Able Y9 pupils, on studying trigonometry for the first time, gain quickly a good understanding of trigonometric ratios and how to apply them to right-angled triangles. Middle-ability Y9 pupils achieve good standards in understanding and using Pythagoras' Theorem.
310. Pupils with SEN achieve good standards and make good progress relative to their abilities. For example, in Y8, they can differentiate between three different kinds of average and are skilled in calculating them accurately.
311. Pupils' basic skills of written computation develop well. Pupils across the ability range generally acquire a good and accurate competency, with the exception of lower-ability pupils' skills of division.
312. Across the key stage, the mental computational skills of able and many middle-ability pupils develop well. These pupils are accurate in a range of basic operations involving integers, decimals, fractions and percentages.

313. Pupils' skills in investigative work which uses and applies mathematics show a clear progression across the key stage. By the end of Y9, pupils across the ability range achieve good standards. Able pupils write extensively to explore a sustained investigation and the best work from lower-ability pupils poses and tests hypotheses with coherence and clarity.

### **Shortcomings**

314. The mental number skills of lower-ability and some middle-ability pupils are of too low a standard. They have a weak understanding of the equivalence between fractions and decimals.

315. Pupils do not use ICT sufficiently to enhance their understanding of mathematics and the standards that they achieve.

### **KS4**

#### **Good features**

316. The positive features of pupils' work in KS3 extend to KS4. Pupils continue to make good progress over time and achieve good standards in their work.

317. At KS4, able pupils in Y10 achieve good standards when solving simultaneous equations. Pupils of lower ability in Y11 make good progress in calculating and using compound measures of speed and density.

318. Pupils with SEN continue to achieve good standards and make good progress. For example, in Y11, they use and interpret information from the local area in various contexts with good understanding.

319. Standards in pupils' GCSE coursework are good and build on the standards achieved in investigative work in Y9.

320. Across the key stage, the mental computational skills of able and many middle-ability pupils develop well. These pupils are accurate in a range of basic operations involving integers, decimals, fractions and percentages.

321. Able pupils write extensively to explore a sustained investigation and the best work from lower-ability pupils poses and tests hypotheses with coherence and clarity.

### **Shortcomings**

322. As in KS3 the mental number skills of lower-ability and some middle-ability pupils are of too low a standard. They have a weak understanding of the equivalence between fractions and decimals.

323. A small minority of pupils have an insecure grasp of trigonometry and simple linear operations.

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

#### **Good features**

324. Good standards are achieved by students in pure mathematics, mechanics and statistics. They make good progress over time.

325. Particularly high standards are achieved in Y12 in mechanics. Students consistently produce high quality in their written work. Their thought processes are clearly and logically expressed when they solve a range of different

problems. They can discuss their work with a good understanding of the concepts involved.

326. In pure mathematics and statistics, students also demonstrate a good overall understanding in their work, although a few are not so confident in explaining some aspects of it.

327. Students' skills of algebraic manipulation are good and are used well in all branches of the subject.

### **Shortcomings**

328. Students do not use ICT sufficiently to help develop their understanding of appropriate aspects of mathematics.

329. Students' speaking skills are not sufficiently used to help sharpen their thinking and enhance the standards that they achieve.

## **Information technology**

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

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

### **KS3**

#### **Good features**

330. Most pupils access confidently the applications and learning resources they need and take full advantage of the regular feedback to improve the quality of their work.

331. Most pupils are able to design and set up basic models, carry out calculations, and produce meaningful charts. The more able can use formula independently.

332. All pupils design and build web pages incorporating hyperlinks with confidence. They demonstrate a clear sense of audience.

333. Pupils regularly check their work for accuracy. The more able explain how to make the changes and the reasons for making them.

334. By Y8 most pupils can collect, store and amend information using a database and carry out meaningful interrogations.

335. By the end of the key stage most pupils use a wide range of applications, with growing confidence. They communicate effectively, combining text and images appropriate for a specific purpose. The project approach offers the opportunity for all pupils to consolidate skills and demonstrate a good appreciation of the needs of the intended audience.

#### **Shortcomings**

336. A small minority of pupils has difficulty in recalling how to insert functions into a spreadsheet table or how to format some data appropriately.

337. Language issues or poor keyboard skills hamper the progress of a few pupils. The most able are not always adequately extended to produce extension work.

## **KS4**

### **Outstanding features**

338. Pupils develop well as independent learners, demonstrating a detailed knowledge in a wide range of applications. By the end of the key stage they can apply these skills to unfamiliar yet meaningful and real problems.
339. Pupils understand that an ICT system has to match the needs of an intended audience and also be fit for a specific purpose. Their work demonstrates that these requirements are carefully considered when designing and producing solutions, some of which are outstanding.

### **Good features**

340. By the end of the key stage most pupils can define computer terms well and can use ICT terminology appropriately. Most pupils can also describe the main features of an application they have used.
341. Most pupils respond well to regular and constructive feedback and use exemplars well to acquaint themselves, and judge themselves, against examination standards. They also make good use of the learning resources available across the intranet to ensure they make the necessary progress at every stage of their learning.
342. Pupils distinguish between primary and secondary assets and are aware of the related issues pertaining to copyright law on the use of many images.
343. All pupils design, collect, store and amend information using a data-handling package for a specific purpose. They understand the need for accuracy and most can perform complex searches.
344. During the Crack the Code project, pupils have demonstrated the ability to create multimedia pages incorporating flash animation. The more able have designed and recorded talking heads with relative ease.
345. Peer review is developing well which enables all pupils to consolidate understanding of specific examination requirements, resulting in solutions of high quality.

### **Shortcomings**

346. A small minority of pupils does not produce, or follow, design briefs.
347. A very small minority in Y10 is not able to distinguish between packages available and has to be directed to one rather than making the choice for themselves.

## **Sixth form: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features**

### **Outstanding features**

348. A large majority of students is highly motivated and demonstrates significant insight in a range of applications.
349. They take full advantage of regular and constructive feedback to produce coursework of very high quality.
350. Students have a very good understanding of theoretical concepts.

### **Good features**

351. Students base their work on real business and community contexts. They are able to research a variety of sources, including the internet, and are discerning about the information they select to use.
352. Students are able to analyse a brief and develop a plan, systematically, drawing upon their understanding of theory and apply prior learning to new concepts with confidence.
353. Most students understand and are able to discuss confidently the merits of presentation styles and what factors make for an effective presentation.
354. By the end of the course, most students display a detailed and thorough understanding of the topics studied, are aware and use examination terminology appropriately and use applications with confidence.

### **Shortcomings**

355. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Geography</b>
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**KS3: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features**

**KS4: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features**

### **KS3**

#### **Outstanding features**

356. Pupils make very good progress. By the end of the key stage their attainment is significantly above national expectation.
357. Pupils respond, with work of a high standard, to the numerous opportunities to carry out individual investigations. They use ICT to research and present their findings. The range and quality of these enquiries are outstanding
358. Pupils have an exceptional understanding of sustainability and global citizenship. In discussion pupils demonstrate an impressive capability to evaluate and develop geographical ideas, value judgements and concepts within numerous case studies.

#### **Good features**

359. Map making and interpretation, atlas skills, and numerical skills are strong. They are developed and applied progressively within studies of the immediate area and other localities.
360. The majority of pupils has a good knowledge and understanding of physical and human processes. They utilize appropriate geographical vocabulary and terminology accurately when considering volcanoes and earthquakes, weather and climate, population growth and migration.
361. Pupils' understanding of broad patterns of phenomena and the places they have studied is good, such as in their work in tectonic plate boundaries, tropical rainforests, and population distribution.
362. Pupils' locational knowledge is good, and progressively developed. They achieve good standards within their studies relating to the development of

Cardiff Bay, the Sea Empress disaster, de-forestation of the rainforests, mass tourism and global environmental change

363. Pupils with SEN respond well. Many achieve beyond expectations.

### **Shortcomings**

364. Pupils' graphical skills are insufficiently developed through the key stage.

### **KS4**

#### **Outstanding features**

365. Pupils consistently achieve well above the national average at grades A\* – C and A\* – G.

366. Pupils have a very good understanding of geographical processes, particularly in relation to physical landforms resulting from glacial erosion and deposition.

367. Pupils use geographical vocabulary and terminology, accurately and consistently, to produce oral and written work to a very high standard. Their interpretation and synthesis of information, from a variety of sources in support of their reasoning, are outstanding.

#### **Good features**

368. The majority of pupils accurately describes and explains the characteristics and formation of physical and human features and relationships within the context of a range of places and environments. Pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of glaciated upland scenery, and the appropriateness and sustainability of development schemes within less economically-developed countries.

369. Pupils engage very effectively in discussion and give presentations of good quality. They use geographical vocabulary and terminology accurately and concisely to produce written and oral work of a very high standard. They interpret and synthesise information from a variety of sources in support of their reasoning. This is particularly evident in their work on urban land-use zones, coastal landforms and river processes.

370. A wide range of geographical skills of very good quality are used and applied by pupils in their individual course assignments. Information and communications technology figures strongly in these field projects.

### **Shortcomings**

371. There are no important shortcomings.

### **Sixth form: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features**

#### **Outstanding features**

372. Standards of achievement are very good. Students achieve 100% pass rates with grades above national averages at both AS and A2 levels. They make very good progress from KS4.

373. Students demonstrate a high level of understanding of the key features of the physical, human and environmental aspects of their course. Their ability to articulate their reasoning orally and in writing, within appropriate case studies, such as urban renewal in Cardiff and the South-East, is outstanding.

### **Good features**

374. Students display very good geographical skills when evaluating and interpreting a range of unfamiliar information, including formulating solutions to the supply of water in the Murray Darling Basin, and the sustainable development of the Solomon Islands.
375. Individual coursework enquiries benefit from a fieldwork programme of high quality. Pupils use effectively a range of geographical techniques, including ICT, to construct and present their findings. Many of these enquiries are of a very high standard.

### **Shortcomings**

376. There are no important shortcomings.

<b>Physical education</b>
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**Key Stage 3: Grade 3 - Good features outweigh shortcomings**

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

### **KS3**

#### **Good features**

377. Pupils demonstrate appropriate knowledge of technique in sprinting and throwing events and manage their activity with due attention to the safety of themselves and others.
378. Progress is apparent over the key stage as pupils build on their skills and their understanding of the importance of exercise. Pupils lead warm-up sessions targeted to the activity effectively.
379. Most pupils, including those with SEN, participate with enthusiasm. Pupils work well together, helping one another and listening carefully to advice or suggestions to improve their performances.
380. The most talented pupils demonstrate good standards in their practical performance.

#### **Shortcomings**

381. There are shortcomings in pupils' planning, problem-solving and evaluating skills.
382. Many pupils lack initiative in managing their own work independently of the teacher.
383. Many pupils lack the fitness to sustain activity throughout the lesson.

### **KS4**

#### **Good features**

384. Standards are consistently good in all aspects of the core and examination curriculum observed in Y10. There are a number of very talented pupils in both Y10 and Y11 who perform to a high level.

385. Within the core programme, boys and girls have sufficient knowledge of the rules and procedures in cricket and baseball to organise and referee their own games.
386. Most pupils use appropriate subject terminology and develop their independence in managing their own learning through effective group work.
387. At GCSE, practical work is good both in physical education and dance. Pupils work hard and are keen to demonstrate what they know. The most able pupils are confident in expressing views and opinions in oral discussion in theory lessons.

### **Shortcomings**

388. Some pupils are not challenged sufficiently by the tasks set within the core programme or the theoretical aspects of GCSE. Written work is generally less secure than practical work.
389. A significant proportion of pupils, and particularly girls, attends and participates intermittently or fails to provide appropriate kit.

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

#### **Good features**

390. Group discussions at AS and A2 level indicate good subject knowledge. The most capable students draw together social, cultural, political and economic aspects of the coursework effectively.
391. Student's personal exercise plans are well organised. The majority of students show a good understanding of the topic.
392. Students improve presentation by appropriate use of ICT.

#### **Shortcomings**

393. A minority of students lack confidence in contributing to oral discussion and the majority relies too heavily on the teacher to extend their thinking skills.
394. There is a lack of specific focus or structure in students' note-taking.

## **School's response to the inspection**

The pupils, staff and governors at St Cyres welcome this report. We are particularly pleased that the team has confirmed that our education provision is of a high standard and that the progress made since the last inspection is outstanding. That the inspection team's grades and findings so closely mirror our own shows that our self-evaluation procedures are rigorous and thorough and confirms that the direction in which we are taking the school is the correct one.

The breadth and balance of the curriculum, the development of the 14-19 Pathways, the outstanding Welsh Baccalaureate results and the way this qualification has transformed standards and provision for post 16 students are all highlighted and reflect the progress the school has made since the last Inspection in 2001.

The school is extremely proud of the fact that the team judged our care and guidance for pupils to be outstanding and worthy of being upgraded to a grade one. The report clearly recognises the ethos of our school which values everyone equally and seeks to enable everyone to succeed regardless of background or ability.

Support to learners was judged to be outstanding, reflecting the strong emphasis the school places on ensuring that pupils settle quickly into the school, the exceptional provision for disabled learners, outstanding provision for SEN pupils and the extremely effective way the school deals with any form of misbehaviour.

We are pleased that the team considered that the mutual respect and courtesy between staff and pupils was an outstanding feature and that innovative teaching takes place. We are proud of the findings that the behaviour of our pupils is 'outstanding' and that the school is an orderly community where pupils show a high level of respect for their peers and adults.

The school's strong focus on community links is also recognised, with effective local partnerships with primary schools and outstanding support for community charitable work.

We also welcome the fact that the report clearly endorses the fact that our many successes are achieved in spite of exceptional constraints placed upon us by our 'minimal levels of funding' compared to many other schools across Wales, our 'costly' split site and the 'poor' design and state of many of our buildings which the team correctly describes as 'inadequate for modern day needs.'

St Cyres wishes to thank the inspection team for the professional manner in which they conducted the inspection. The school is proud of the achievements recorded in this report, welcomes the recommendations, which our own planning already recognises, and hopes that the new accommodation will allow the school to move onto the next level of its development.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	St Cyres Comprehensive School
School type	Secondary
Age range of pupils	11-18
Address of school	St Cyres Road Penarth Vale of Glamorgan
Postcode	CF64 2XP
Telephone number	02920-708708

Headteacher	Mr Brian Lightman
Date of appointment	1 September 1999
Chair of governors	Mrs A Males OBE
Reporting inspector	Mr Peter Harris
Dates of inspection	23-27 April 2007

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	237	225	252	263	261	141	115	1494

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	88	9	94.3

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	15.8:1
Average teaching group size	22
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	73%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole school
Term 1	97	97	95	93	96	96	96	96
Term 2	94	92	91	90	90	91	91	91
Term 3	93	90	90	91	85	90	90	90

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	13%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection*	75 temporary 1 permanent

\*Note: this data spans two academic years

## Appendix 3

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

			D	F	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	1	5	21	35	27	11	0
		National	1	0	0	0	2	8	21	35	24	8	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	5	14	22	38	19	2
		National	1	0	0	0	1	6	18	24	32	15	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	1	9	40	42	8	0
		National	1	0	0	0	0	6	19	33	27	12	0

D Pupils excepted under statutory arrangements from part of the National Curriculum

A Pupils who have failed to register a level because of absence

F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence

W Pupils who are working towards level 1

EP Exceptional Performance, where pupils at key stage 3 perform above level 8

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language)

by teacher assessment

In the school	67%	In Wales	58%
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### 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 2006	265
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	42

The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2006:	School	UA	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	87	92	88
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	62	65	54
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	86	90	86
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	42	48	41
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	96	98	98
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	80	84	77
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent	94	94	93
attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent	6	6	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	2	2	3
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1	-		
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2	-		

<b>For pupils aged 17, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs</b>	
Number of pupils aged 17 in January 2006	122
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2006	109
Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2006	13

	<b>School</b>	<b>UA</b>	<b>Wales</b>
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C	84	72	68
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E	95	96	94
Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects	27	23	20
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ at level 2	-		
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Advanced or NVQ at level 3	-		

UA Unitary Authority

## **Appendix 4**

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

Inspectors spent a total of 51 days in the school and were joined by the school's deputy headteacher as nominee. They held a meeting before the inspection.

During the inspection, inspectors visited:

- 142 lessons, 98 lessons in the six subjects inspected and 44 lessons in all other subjects;
- registrations and assemblies; and
- some extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team met with:

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

The team also considered:

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

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

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team member	Responsibilities
Mr Peter Harris	Rgl, KQ1, KQ5, Summary, Recommendations, Appendices
Mrs Rhiannon Boardman	Lay Inspector contributing to KQ1, KQ3, KQ4, KQ7
Mr Alan Kelly	KQ2
Mr Huw Llewelyn	KQ3
Mr David Hughes	KQ4
Mr Paul Donovan	KQ4: Additional learning needs
Mr Martyn Williams	KQ6
Mr Angus Dunphy	KQ7
Mr Rod Ashley	English
Mr Zac Davies	Welsh Second Language
Mr Michael Heylings	Mathematics
Mr Paul Martin	Information Technology
Mr Andrew Herdman	Geography
Ms Debra Makin	Physical Education
Dr Jonathan Hicks	Nominee

### ***Acknowledgement***

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

#### **Contractors**

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