

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

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

**St Joseph's RC High School  
Tredegar Park  
Newport  
NP10 8XH**

**School Number: 6804602**

**Date of Inspection: 22 – 26 January 2007**

**by**

**Miss Glynis Owen  
8205**

**Date of Publication: 19 March 2007**

**Under Estyn contract number: 1203706**

**© Crown Copyright 2007: This report may be re-used free of charge in any format or medium provided that it is re-used accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the report specified.**

Copies of this report are available from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide copies of the report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the cost of reproduction may be made to others requesting a copy of the report.

St Joseph's RC High School, Newport, 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 Joseph's RC High School, Newport, took place between 22/01/07 and 26/01/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by Miss Glynis Owen 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

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

A	Advanced
AS	Advanced Subsidiary
ASDAN	Award Scheme Development and Accreditation
CASE	Cognitive Acceleration through Science Education
CAME	Cognitive Acceleration through Mathematics Education
CATE	Cognitive Acceleration through Technology Education
CBD	Central Business District
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
EAL	English as an Additional Language
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
KS	Key Stage
LRC	Learning Resource Centre
LSA	Learning Support Assistant
NC	National Curriculum
NPQH	National Professional Qualification for Headteachers
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
PPA	Planning Preparation and Assessment
PSE	Personal and Social Education
PTFA	Parents Teachers and Friends Association
SEN	Special Educational Needs
UA	Unitary Authority
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WRE	Work-related Education
WSSA	Welsh Secondary Schools Association
Y (1-13)	Year (1-13)

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Summary</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>7</b>
Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?	7
<b>The quality of education and training</b>	<b>12</b>
Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	12
Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	17
Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	21
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>23</b>
Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?	23
Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	25
Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	28
<b>Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning</b>	<b>31</b>
English	31
Welsh second language	33
Science	35
Information technology	36
Geography	38
Music	39
<b>School's response to the inspection</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>42</b>
1 Basic information about the school	42
2 School data and indicators	42
3 National Curriculum assessments results	43
4 Evidence base of the inspection	45
5 Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team	46

## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. St Joseph's RC High School, Newport, is a voluntary-aided, mixed, 11-18 school, in the city of Newport and within the Catholic Archdiocese of Cardiff. There are 1387 pupils on roll, an increase of nearly 250 since the last inspection in March 2001. There are 236 students in the sixth form, an increase of 80 since that time.
2. Most pupils come from within the city of Newport, and a small minority comes from Risca, Caldicot and Chepstow. Pupils come from socio-economic backgrounds which range from advantaged to disadvantaged. Overall, 14.5% of pupils are entitled to free school meals, compared to 16.6% nationally. Most pupils come from Catholic families; about 30% of pupils come from other Christian denominations and faith groups.
3. Pupils represent the full range of ability. Attainment on entry has steadily improved and, recently, has been just above the national average. However, results in reading tests, taken just after entry, show that a significant number of pupils has reading scores below their chronological age. There is a larger proportion of pupils with SEN than at the time of the last inspection. Thirty-three pupils have statements of SEN, and a further 209 have been identified as needing some support. Nevertheless, this is a slightly smaller proportion than nationally.
4. Just over 10% of pupils come from minority ethnic heritages. Sixty-two pupils currently speak English as an additional language, of whom 30 receive additional teaching. No pupils come from Welsh-speaking homes.
5. The headteacher and two deputy headteachers have remained in post since the last inspection. The two assistant headteachers have been appointed since that time, one from outside the school.
6. In November 2004, the school moved from its previous premises to a completely new building on a new site. It retained the use of its adjacent playing fields.
7. Religious education and collective worship are inspected by a representative of the Archdiocese, under section 48/50 of the Schools' Inspection Act, and a separate report is published.

### The school's priorities and targets

8. The school's mission statement is "Serving God Through Learning Together" and it has three broad aims, to:
  - teach the Roman Catholic faith and to provide a formation for each child that will allow that child to realise his/her full potential in all aspects of moral and spiritual development;
  - provide a balanced educational programme appropriate to the needs of each child, recognising the uniqueness of each child, while at the same time, providing equality of opportunity for all; and

- provide a social education enabling all children to play an important role in the life of the community.
9. It sets numerical targets for public examinations, that in 2007:
- 54%-62% of boys, and 66%-78% of girls should reach at least level five in all three core subjects combined, in the NC teacher assessments at the end of KS3; and
  - in the GCSE examinations, 59% - 65% of pupils should gain at least five grades A\*-C, and 94% - 96% of pupils should gain at least five grades A\*-G, with all pupils leaving school with qualifications.

## Summary

10. St. Joseph's RC High School, Newport, is a very good school with many outstanding features. These are in all key areas and represent continuing and significant progress since the last inspection. The school provides very well for pupils' academic progress in a vibrant and purposeful learning atmosphere. It also provides very well for pupils' spiritual and moral development; the school community lives out its mission statement in practice. At the heart of the school's success is the inspirational leadership of the headteacher.

### Table of grades awarded

Key Question	Inspection grade
1. How well do learners achieve?	1
2. How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	1
3. How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	1
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?	1

11. These grades match those of the school's self-evaluation report in all seven key questions. This is a very high level of consistency and performance.

### Standards of achievement

12. The outstanding features are the:
- public examination results at all key stages;
  - standards as observed by inspectors;
  - progress of pupils of all abilities and backgrounds;
  - standards of behaviour;
  - pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
  - extent to which pupils take responsibility for their own learning; and

- improvement in and current level of attendance.

13. In the six subjects inspected, the following grades were awarded:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>KS3</b>	<b>KS4</b>	<b>Sixth Form</b>
English	1	1	1
Welsh second language	2	3	-
Science	2	2	2
Information Technology	2	1	2
Geography	2	2	2
Music	1	2	2

14. These grades represent a high level of achievement and consistency. Standards in Welsh second language at KS4 are adversely affected by a limited amount of curricular time for the short course.

15. The following grades were awarded for standards of achievement in the 92 lessons observed in the six subjects:

<b>Key Stage</b>	<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
KS3	23%	62%	15%	0%	0%
KS4	17%	60%	23%	0%	0%
KS3 & 4	20%	61%	19%	0%	0%
Sixth Form	6%	88%	6%	0%	0%
Total	17%	67%	16%	0%	0%

16. The sample of lessons seen in the sixth form was very small and therefore comparisons between key stages are not reliable.

17. The overall figure of 84% of lessons graded 1 or 2 is high and substantially exceeds the WAG target for 2007 of 65%. All lessons were graded at least 3, compared to the target of 98%. The figure of 84% is also well above the latest figure for all inspections in Wales, when 65% of lessons were graded 1 or 2. Moreover, the current figure is a significant improvement on the figure of the previous inspection, when 52% of lessons were graded 1 or 2.

18. Results in NC tests and at GCSE have similarly improved considerably since the last inspection, at a much higher rate than nationally. Results are now well above national averages, and in the top quartile when compared to results in schools with a similar intake.

19. There is open access to the sixth form and results are in line with local and national averages. The proportion of top grades has improved substantially. A large percentage of students goes on to Higher Education, with some successful applications to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

20. Pupils and students of all abilities and backgrounds do well at the school. There is a strong sense of inclusion. Pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with SEN achieve very well. The most able also achieve well in many classes and in extension activities, but they could be further challenged in some classes. Pupils of average and lower ability, both boys and girls, do particularly well.

21. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are exceptionally good. There is mutual respect between teachers and pupils and amongst pupils themselves. Pupils and students are open, friendly, articulate and welcoming to visitors.

22. They also have a strong spiritual and moral dimension, seen in a sense of responsibility, care and worship. Pupils and students are outward-looking and raise large sums of money for those less fortunate.
23. The adoption of a UA initiative called 'Building Learning Power' has had a significant impact on pupils' development as learners. They assume a high degree of responsibility for their progress and show motivation, resilience and independence in working towards realising their potential.
24. The annual attendance rate last year rose to 92%, which is higher than in many schools, and an improvement on the figure at the last inspection. Attendance in the first term of this academic year was almost 94%.
25. Pupils have good key skills of communication, numeracy and ICT. They achieve very well in tests and examinations in English and mathematics, at the end of KS3 and KS4 and many gain qualifications in applied ICT at the end of KS4. The school has gained the Basic Skills Award. Virtually all pupils leave school with qualifications at the end of KS4 and they have a good foundation for becoming lifelong learners. About 80% gain qualification at GCSE in Welsh second language, but bilingual skills are not used in subjects across the curriculum.

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

26. The outstanding features are the:
  - quality of teaching;
  - flexibility of the curriculum to meet the needs of individuals;
  - provision for pupils' personal development;
  - breadth of extra-curricular opportunities;
  - implementation of the WAG priorities;
  - quality of care, support and guidance;
  - provision for additional learning needs; and
  - provision for equal opportunities.
27. The following grades were awarded for teaching in the 92 lessons observed in the six subjects, and in the 37 lessons observed in 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>
6 subjects	21%	68%	11%	0%	0%
Other subjects	43%	46%	11%	0%	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>

28. Although the size and nature of this sample are different from those of the last inspection, these grades show a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. At that time, 64% of lessons were graded 1 or 2, compared to 89% in this inspection, with an increase in the proportion graded 1, from 10% to 27%. The current figures are also higher than the latest figures for all inspections in Wales, in which 69% of lessons were graded 1 or 2, and 5% were graded 4.

29. Teachers and support assistants are highly committed to the values of the school, enthusiastic about teaching and very generous in the amount of time they give, in addition to their classroom responsibilities.
30. The curriculum provides appropriately for all subjects except Welsh second language at KS4, and is tailored very well to meet individual needs. There are already some individual learning pathways, for those who choose vocationally-based options and there are good opportunities for pupils and students to gain qualifications in community languages.
31. The curriculum is extended by a wealth of extra-curricular opportunities across the range of subjects. Individuals and small groups have been successful in national competitions. Many pupils and students take part in musical and dramatic productions of very high quality, as well as in a range of sporting activities, with a number successful at national and international level.
32. Through curricular and extra-curricular experiences, through PSE and through acts of worship, there is much emphasis on the development of the whole person. The outcomes are evident in pupils' respectful attitudes and in the corporate and family ethos of the school.
33. The school has received several awards for the quality of its delivery of the WAG priorities. Sustainable development, transition between the key stages, healthy living, preparation for lifelong learning, racial equality and global citizenship all have a high profile and, more importantly, are embedded effectively in practice. Pupils benefit from the quality of these experiences.
34. The quality of care, support and guidance which pupils and students receive is exceptionally good. Very good personal relationships between staff and pupils are at the core of pastoral care. In addition, there are many systems in place to ensure effective support, long and short-term, including a computerised system to monitor pupils on a daily basis and respond appropriately.
35. Provision for pupils with additional learning needs is very good, within an atmosphere of inclusion. Pupils of differing abilities, needs and backgrounds are given appropriate individual support, through a wide variety of strategies and access to a range of internal and external providers.
36. The assessment of pupils' work has several good features but is not yet consistent between subjects and, sometimes, between classes in a subject. Formal assessments and subsequent feed-back are of higher quality than the day-to-day marking of pupils' work.

### **Leadership and management**

37. The outstanding features are the:
  - vision and clear direction by the headteacher, governors, and senior leadership team, with strong support from middle managers;
  - vibrant learning culture, improvement in standards and examination results, strong ethos of values and extent to which these are shared with pupils, parents and the wider community;
  - high quality of self-evaluation, seen both in systems whereby all associated with the school contribute, including pupils, and in the reflective attitudes in practice;

- effectiveness of planning, which has brought about measurable improvements;
  - design and quality of the accommodation, which provides a very attractive learning environment;
  - effectiveness of continuing professional development; and
  - level of resourcing, evaluation of the management of resources and the drive for further improvement.
38. The school's success owes much to the outstanding leadership by the headteacher. She leads by example, and through very good personal relationships, in the areas of both teaching and learning and in terms of ethos and worship. The school's mission statement is widely fulfilled in practice.
39. She is very ably supported by members of the senior leadership team, who have taken on the WAG priorities and delivered a high quality of provision in practice, gaining several national awards.
40. The governing body also gives outstanding leadership. Their success in strategic planning is demonstrated by their ability to have delivered a new school building on time and within budget, but is also evident in many other areas. They have a detailed knowledge of the school's performance and extend their knowledge by evaluating their own performance.
41. Middle managers, with key roles in the school, contribute much to its success, by their enthusiasm, professional development, and generous contribution of time beyond expectations. There is a strong sense of teamwork in the school.
42. Self-evaluation arrangements are long-established and effective. Since the last inspection, there has been an increase in the extent to which all associated with the school contribute to these systems. The voice of pupils and students is unusually well developed, in evaluating the quality of standards, teaching and learning, as well as in other areas. The culture of reflection is embedded, though there are some inconsistencies in the quality of departmental self-evaluation.
43. There has been measurable progress, in the key issues from the last inspection, in the improvements in all areas and in the amount of innovative practice. Planning is thorough and on a three-year time-scale. However, this year's priorities do not stand out sufficiently.
44. The input into the design of the new buildings by the headteacher, governors, senior leadership team and staff has contributed effectively to a highly attractive learning environment which is fit for purpose.
45. The school is very well resourced, consistently across the curriculum, with additional strengths in central ICT facilities, the LRC and the sixth-form facilities. Resources are very well managed, their use is regularly evaluated and further improvements are planned, by both the school's leadership and by the governing body. The budget is, similarly, skilfully managed.

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

46. The school has made very good progress in:
- improving standards across the curriculum;

- improving standards in information technology at KS3 from unsatisfactory to good;
- ensuring that monitoring of practice in departments is consistently rigorous;
- increasing the curricular provision for design and technology, and for Welsh second language at KS3; and
- resolving the health and safety issues, which were related to the previous building and site.

47. It has extended the time for Welsh second language at KS4, but not sufficiently and this remains a recommendation.

## Recommendations

In order to build on its current success, the school should focus on the following priorities. Standards, teaching, assessment and the provision for Welsh second language are all areas for development in the school's improvement plan.

R1. Continue to maintain and improve standards and examination results.

R2. Ensure that teaching strategies to extend the most able, in all classes, match the best practice observed.

R3. Ensure greater consistency in assessment practice across the curriculum.

R4. Allocate more timetabled provision for the teaching of Welsh second language at KS4.

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 1: Good with outstanding features

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

49. The **outstanding features** are the:

- public examination results at all key stages;
- standards as observed by inspectors;
- progress of pupils of all abilities and backgrounds;
- standards of behaviour;
- pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;

- extent to which pupils take responsibility for their own learning; and
- improvement in and current level of attendance.

50. In the six subjects inspected, there are outstanding features in English at all key stages, in information technology at KS4 and in music at KS3. In all other subjects and key stages there are no important shortcomings, except in Welsh second language at KS4, where standards are adversely affected by limited curricular time. Overall, this is a high level of achievement and consistency.
51. In the 92 lessons observed in those six subjects, the following grades were awarded:

Key Stage	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3 & KS4	20%	61%	19%	0%	0%
Sixth Form	6%	88%	6%	0%	0%
Total	17%	67%	16%	0%	0%

52. The sample of lessons seen in the sixth form was small, and thus comparison between the key stages is not reliable.
53. The overall figure of 84% of lessons graded 1 or 2 is high, and substantially exceeds the WAG target for 2007 of 65%. All lessons seen were graded 3 and above, compared to the target of 98%. The figures of 84% of lessons graded 1 or 2, and 100% graded 3 and above, are also well above the latest figures for all inspections in Wales, of 65% and 94% respectively.
54. Although the size and nature of the sample of lessons are different from those of the last inspection, it is clear that the school has made considerable progress. In 2001, 52% of lessons were graded 1 or 2, and 97% were graded 3 and above.

### **Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4**

#### **Their success in attaining agreed learning goals**

##### **Outstanding Features**

55. Results in the NC tests/teacher assessments at the end of KS3 represent outstanding progress since the last inspection. The percentage of pupils gaining at least level five in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science combined, has risen from 48% in 2001, to 70% in tests and 76% in teacher assessments in 2006, compared to a rise nationally of 8%. Results in the last four years have been well above the national average; in 2006, the national average was 58%.
56. Results in each of the core subjects have risen accordingly. In comparison to schools with a similar intake, results in each subject in 2006, and the percentage of pupils gaining at least level five in all three combined, were in the top quartile. This has been consistent in virtually every indicator in the last three years.
57. These results reflect the emphasis which the school has placed on laying the foundations for achieving potential, at KS3. Strong performance in the core subjects, with strategies for literacy and numeracy intervention, to help individuals, have been effective, together with consistent emphasis on key skills

across the curriculum. There is less of a gender gap in performance than nationally.

58. Pupils successfully build on their achievement at KS3 in KS4. GCSE results reflect a marked improvement since the last inspection. In 2006, 59% of pupils gained at least five grades A\*-C, compared to 46% in 2001, and compared to a rise nationally of 4%. Results are above the national average and well above the local average.
59. Over the last six years, on average, nearly 95% of pupils have gained five or more grades A\*-G at GCSE, with particularly good performance in the core subjects, especially English and mathematics. Virtually every pupil has gained qualifications.
60. Pupils of differing abilities are all successful at GCSE. There is an appropriate percentage of top grades, pupils of average to lower ability are challenged and succeed, and pupils with SEN and EAL perform very well. Whilst there is a gender gap in English, with girls doing significantly better, boys' and girls' results are above the respective national averages and there is less of a gender gap than nationally. Pupils generally meet or exceed their targets, based on data of prior attainment.

### **Good Features**

61. The level of consistency between subjects is good, as is the consistency between classes within subjects. This has improved significantly since the last inspection, and standards have also risen across the curriculum.
62. Pupils have good key skills, and consistency is also evident in the extent to which they are applied. Listening skills are very good. Reading skills are good, with pupils targeted and supported, to boost their reading skills. The most able read widely for research purposes and can skim and scan texts effectively to extract information.
63. Pupils are articulate and can speak confidently in discussions and when giving presentations. In a small minority of subjects, extended speech is not promoted sufficiently, to challenge the most able.
64. Writing is of a good standard, with effective support given to improve technical accuracy. The standard of extended writing by the most able is very good.
65. Standards of numeracy are good, and pupils apply numbers successfully in appropriate subjects across the curriculum. Standards in ICT at KS3 have improved from unsatisfactory at the last inspection, to good. Standards in cross-curricular use of ICT are also good at KS4, with a substantial number of pupils achieving very well in applied ICT courses at GCSE.
66. Pupils achieve very good standards in working together and improving their own performance. They have appropriate opportunities for creative and problem-solving activities and do well.

### **Shortcoming**

67. Standards in bilingualism are not as good as in the other key skills and have some shortcomings. Welsh is rarely used incidentally, and has limited curricular provision at KS4. Nevertheless, about 80% of pupils, each year, gain a grade A\*-G at GCSE, but there are fewer grades A\*-C than in other subjects.

## **Their progress in learning**

### **Outstanding Features**

68. The extent to which pupils are independent and reflective learners is an outstanding feature of their progress. The UA initiative, 'Building Learning Power', has had a significant impact on pupils' attitudes and success as learners. They understand and act upon the four "Rs" of resilience, resourcefulness, reflectiveness and reciprocity, with very positive effects on their current progress and their potential as lifelong learners.
69. The school's emphasis on 'thinking skills', and on the initiatives of CASE, CAME and CATE is also translated effectively into practice, with learners prepared to think for themselves.
70. Pupils take a larger than usual degree of responsibility for their own progress. They receive feedback on their progress from many different sources. An outstanding feature is that the computerised data system gives them daily feedback from form tutors on particularly positive or negative features, and there is appropriate action to enable pupils to remain on course. Relative to their age, pupils have a mature sense of responsibility and take pride in their success as learners.
71. As a result, a high proportion of pupils stay on into the sixth form, aided by the mentoring of all pupils in Y11, in groups of six, by staff. Unusually, pupils also receive mentoring by sixth-form students, a process which is mutually beneficial.

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

### **Outstanding Features**

72. The development of the whole person is at the heart of the school's ethos. The extent to which it is translated effectively into practice is an outstanding feature of the school.
73. Pupils have a strong spiritual and moral dimension, which is seen in a mature sense of responsibility, care for others and worship. They are respectful to staff, visitors and other pupils and the school has an aura of calm. They are also outward-looking, raising large sums of money for others less fortunate and being involved in activities in the community.
74. Pupils' social and cultural development is also very good. Pupils are sociable, and relate very well to others, including those in different year groups. The school and year councils work efficiently, with pupils having a real voice in the running and self-evaluation of the school. Welsh culture is promoted in class and through the annual eisteddfod. Other cultures are also celebrated. Pupils and students broaden their horizons through many visits abroad.
75. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. Pupils are sensitive to other pupils' needs and there is a prevalent sense of inclusion, with pupils of differing abilities helping each other. Pupils who have English as an additional language receive support from other pupils as well as from staff.
76. The importance of good attendance is understood by pupils. The annual rate of 92%, in 2005-2006, is higher than in many schools, and an improvement on that of the last inspection by 2%. It is just short of the WAG target of 93%. In

the term prior to the inspection, attendance increased to almost 94%. Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons, though there are sometimes problems with the late arrival of buses.

## **Sixth Form**

### **Their success in attaining agreed learning goals**

#### **Outstanding Features**

77. The sixth form remains open-access to all who will benefit from one or two-year courses. Advanced level results have improved since the last inspection, in the average points' score and in the percentage of grades A-C attained. The average points' score has improved from 17 to 19, which is in line with the local average and just below the national average. The percentage of students gaining two or more grades A-C has increased from 44% in 2001 to 62% in 2006.
78. There has been particularly good performance in English, history, mathematics, law and sociology, by comparison with students' prior attainment. Individuals have scored among the highest marks, nationally, in sociology, law, geography, French and GNVQ Manufacturing.

#### **Good Features**

79. Students have good key skills. They all gain accreditation in communication and there are plans to offer numeracy and ICT in the next academic year. In lessons across the curriculum, students show that they have very good listening skills, and good speaking, reading and writing skills. They collaborate well and respond effectively to creative and problem-solving opportunities.

#### **Shortcoming**

80. Bilingual skills are not well developed.

### **Their progress in learning**

#### **Outstanding Features**

81. The outstanding feature about students' progress is their independence as learners. The strategies described previously apply equally to the sixth form, as the school is a vibrant learning community. Sixth-formers are also strongly self-disciplined, realising the importance of regular attendance and good study habits.
82. They are also very well informed about their progress, from the verbal and written feedback, daily and longer-term, which they receive. Their mature attitudes enable them to act sensibly on advice and critical comment, with a view to improvement.

#### **Good Features**

83. There is a high retention rate during the sixth form, and a high percentage of students goes on to Higher Education, with some successful applications to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Individual students with SEN and EAL have continued their studies in the sixth form and have proceeded to Higher Education.

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

### Outstanding Features

84. Sixth formers are mature young adults, who are confident but not arrogant and who relate easily to staff, visitors and their peers.
85. They are very good role models to younger pupils and over a hundred students in Y12 act as reading or number 'Buddies' or mentors to younger pupils. They also help in sporting activities.
86. In a wide range of activities, they take a leading role – in chairing the school council, in organising charity events and in numerous extra-curricular clubs and competitions. They lead in worship, in campaigns such as 'racial justice week' and in the school's inclusive ethos.
87. They make very good use of the independent study facilities, such as the LRC, ICT suites and ICT resources within the sixth-form area.
88. Attendance has improved from 91% to 93% in Y12 since the last inspection and from 87% to 91% in Y13. Students are punctual to school, apart from on occasions when buses are late, and to lessons.

## The quality of education and training

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

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

89. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.
90. The **outstanding features** are that:
  - in over a quarter of all lessons inspected, teaching was awarded a grade 1;
  - in nearly nine out of every ten lessons inspected, teaching was awarded a grade 1 or a grade 2;
  - very good working relationships exist amongst pupils and teachers;
  - consistently good teaching derives from effective planning and clear objectives;
  - an effective range of teaching and learning strategies is used;
  - equality of opportunity is successfully promoted; and
  - the monitoring of students' progress in the sixth form is thorough and rigorous.
91. In the 92 lessons observed in the six subjects and the 37 lessons observed in other subjects, the following grades were awarded:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
6 subjects	21%	68%	11%	0%	0%
Other subjects	43%	46%	11%	0%	0%
Total	27%	62%	11%	0%	0%

92. These figures compare very favourably with those for all inspections in Wales 2005-2006, when 69% of lessons were graded 1 or 2, of which 17% were graded 1. Nationally, 5% were graded 4.
93. These grades are significantly higher than those awarded in the school's last inspection, and represent considerable improvement, although a comparison is not wholly reliable because of a difference in the size and nature of the sample. At that time, 64% were graded 1 or 2, with 10% graded 1, and 97% were graded 3 and above.

### **Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4**

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

##### **Outstanding Features**

94. The following grades were awarded for the quality of teaching in the 75 lessons observed in the six subjects inspected and the 28 lessons observed in other subjects, at KS3 and KS4.

	<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
6 subjects	23%	64%	13%	0%	0%
Other lessons	43%	43%	14%	0%	0%
Total	28%	58%	14%	0%	0%

95. The school has established very good working relationships between pupils and teachers and amongst the pupils themselves. An outstanding feature of the teaching is the high degree of mutual respect and courtesy. Such relationships enhance the quality of teaching and learning across all subjects.
96. Teachers' planning is consistently of a high order. Departmental schemes of work are of good quality and effectively support the planning of work for individual lessons. Learning objectives for lessons are clear and are usually made explicit to pupils at the start of lessons. Planning is translated, with a high degree of consistency across all subjects, into good teaching and, at KS3 even more often than at KS4, outstanding teaching.
97. The best teaching is characterised by lessons which are well structured and manage pupils' time well. They proceed at a brisk pace and succeed in motivating pupils. A wide range of appropriate teaching and learning strategies is a strong positive feature of many lessons, and especially so at KS3. In these lessons, teachers plan effectively for pupils to learn, sometimes as a whole class and, at other times, in groups and pairs, and as individuals. In particular, the use of data projectors has a strongly beneficial impact on many lessons and the use of lap-top computers is, at times, outstanding.
98. Teaching throughout the school successfully promotes equality of opportunity to such an extent that all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnic background or educational need, are fully and consistently included as equal partners in their learning.

##### **Good Features**

99. Teachers are well qualified for the subjects that they teach. The good knowledge of their subjects, reinforced by continuing professional development, is made evident in the consistently high quality of their teaching.

100. In both key stages, teaching is successful in engaging all pupils in their work and providing appropriate challenge for most pupils.
101. In both key stages, pupils of lower ability respond well to good teaching and those with SEN benefit from teaching which is well tailored to their particular needs. Planned co-operation between teachers and learning support assistants is particularly effective: the resultant teaching ensures that the language needs of pupils with SEN and of pupils with EAL are well met within the limits of the school's current provision of support. The number of pupils with EAL warrants an increase in this provision.

### **Shortcomings**

102. Able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in all classes. Tasks are not sufficiently open-ended and they are not given enough opportunities for independent thinking.
103. In a few lessons, the pace of teaching and learning is too slow. At times, the teacher holds too central a role for too long, a practice which reduces the time for pupils' active learning.
104. ICT is taught across the curriculum in KS3 and, as yet, some teachers are not fully confident in some aspects of its use.
105. Pupils' access to bilingual teaching, beyond that which occurs in Welsh lessons, is limited in scope and nature. Whereas pupils speak Welsh daily in prayers in some tutor periods, at other times it is only used incidentally by some teachers.

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

#### **Good Features**

106. The school uses a variety of appropriate assessment data from external and internal sources which are moderated against teachers' professional judgements of pupils' likely progress. Data are used effectively to set realistic whole-school targets, which are discussed and agreed with the school's governors and the UA. These data, in conjunction with departmental assessments, are also used appropriately to allocate pupils to teaching groups and identify those who need particular support.
107. Annual reviews of departmental examination results, against predicted targets, are rigorous. Any areas of concern which are identified are subsequently addressed, for example, in departments' improvement plans.
108. Within the broad guidelines of the whole-school assessment policy, departments have much autonomy in deciding how they assess and mark pupils' work. At its best, teachers' marking of pupils' written work is consistent over time, diagnoses pupils' errors and misunderstandings, informs pupils how they might improve, and sets them succinct, realistic subject-specific targets. Such high quality of marking is found in most departments, but not in all.
109. At KS3, some departments use portfolios of pupils' work effectively to assess pupils' performance accurately against the levels of the NC.
110. During the course of most lessons, teachers are skilled in assessing pupils' performance in the tasks being undertaken and providing guidance and support to improve pupils' learning at that time. For example, in a whole-class activity,

when pupils display their work, each on their own white-board, teachers identify misunderstandings and readily respond to correct them.

111. All departments provide for pupils to make their own judgements about their individual performance and progress. In many instances, pupils reflect thoughtfully about their strengths and how they might improve, and their teachers make comment and suggest targets. Furthermore, when pupils are asked to judge their own performance against the levels of the NC, some are well able to do so. However, others have only a limited understanding of the levels.
112. Pupils and students have been involved in discussing the quality of marking in the school council. They have highlighted the features which they find most helpful and also ways in which marking could be improved further.
113. The school has an appropriate calendar from Y7 to Y13 for meeting parents and reporting to them through interim and full annual reports. Comments and targets written by pupils' subject teachers are at their best when they give succinct subject-specific detail. The full reports also include the pupils' own well-structured personal statements, composed with appropriate guidance from their form tutors. They include a self-assessment and the pupils' own ideas on how they might improve. Parents are invited to reply to reports and the school responds as necessary. These are all good features.
114. The school meets statutory requirements for assessment and reporting and fulfils the regulations of examination bodies.

### **Shortcomings**

115. There are, however, some inconsistencies of practice both between departments and within some departments. The areas of inconsistency are the:
  - teachers' marking and grading of pupils' work;
  - use of portfolios of pupils' work;
  - strategies used for pupils' self-assessment and their outcomes; and
  - nature of subject contributions in reports to parents.

### **Sixth form**

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

116. The following grades were awarded for the quality of teaching in the 17 lessons observed in the six subjects inspected and the nine lessons observed in other subjects.

	<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
6 subjects	12%	88%	0%	0%	0%
Other lessons	44%	56%	0%	0%	0%
Total	23%	77%	0%	0%	0%

117. Teaching was awarded either a grade 1 or a grade 2 in all the lessons inspected; there were no important shortcomings in any lessons. In the school's

last inspection, teaching in the sixth form was judged to be particularly good; this position has been maintained and built upon.

### **Outstanding Features**

118. The features judged outstanding in KS3 and KS4 continue to be so in the sixth form, namely, that:

- very good relationships between students and teachers contribute significantly to good learning;
- consistently good planning for lessons provides students with clear learning objectives;
- well-structured lessons use students' time well in a wide variety of appropriate ways; and
- provision of equality of opportunity values all students equally as learners.

### **Good Features**

119. Teachers' knowledge of their subjects and of the requirements of AS and A level examinations are used to good effect in providing a sharp focus to lessons in all subjects.

120. In almost all lessons, teachers' expectations of their students are well judged and the challenge set them is appropriate and well matched to the requirements of AS and A level examinations.

121. There is a large measure of consistency in how the start and end of many lessons are planned and taught. Teachers' introductions usefully recapitulate what has been learned previously and, at the end of lessons, plenary sessions often bring together what has been learned during the lesson.

### **Shortcoming**

122. In a few lessons, the teacher's role is too central for too long and the pace of learning slows. In some lessons, the demands on students are not sufficiently challenging.

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

#### **Outstanding Features**

123. The thorough and rigorous monitoring of students' progress in the sixth form is an outstanding feature. Both the outcomes of the school's own annual examinations in Y12 and Y13 and the results of AS and A level modules are compared with teachers' expectations of students' performance. When judged necessary, the comparison leads to discussions with individual students, teachers and parents about the best way forward. At other times, teachers monitor students' progress and, when appropriate, promptly inform the head of sixth form, for any necessary action to be taken.

124. Students with SEN and those with EAL receive particular attention in monitoring processes, which, on occasions, have led to individual students receiving specific support.

### **Good Features**

125. Most of the assessment and marking of students' work is good, as teachers inform students clearly of the criteria used in examinations and the requirements of the examination boards.
126. During lessons, there is much productive oral feedback to students about their work which helps them to improve. Discussions between teachers and individual students, to give feedback and assist improvement, also take place frequently outside lesson time, on request. Some worthwhile peer-marking is undertaken, whereby students assess the work of another student, to suggest where improvements might be made.
127. Students' written work is usually well marked and often suitably linked to examination criteria. Students said that they felt well supported by teachers' marking. Self-assessment and subject-specific targets for improvement are regular, worthwhile features of the work in most subjects.
128. Subject teachers' contributions to the students' annual full reports are generally sharper and more subject-specific than similar contributions at KS3 and KS4. In these reports, the students' personal statements about their achievements and progress are well written and intentionally seen as good practice for the statements written when applying for university entrance.

### **Shortcoming**

129. Some subject-specific comments in reports are not sufficiently sharp.

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

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

130. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.
131. The **outstanding features** are the:
  - curricular provision to meet the needs of the individual learner;
  - breadth of the extra-curricular programme;
  - promotion of pupils' personal development;
  - quality of the transition and induction arrangements;
  - contribution of sixth formers to the learning experiences of younger pupils;
  - sustainable development and global citizenship programme;
  - equality of access and opportunity for all learners; and
  - development of entrepreneurial skills.

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

#### **Outstanding Features**

132. The curricular needs of individuals are paramount. At KS3, there are literacy and numeracy interventions as appropriate and many supportive activities to promote inclusion. Courses at KS4 are tailored to ability and aptitude. The vast

majority of pupils follows a course of eight subjects at GCSE. Those pupils identified as 'borderline', in gaining at least five grades A\*-C, are counselled to follow an 'Enhanced Core Programme'. This enables them to receive an extra hour's tuition, every week, in science, religious education and English.

133. For pupils for whom a vocational pathway is more appropriate, the option blocks provide for a fully or partly vocational pathway. Within the option blocks, the school offers double GCSE awards in applied science, leisure and tourism, applied ICT and the ASDAN course.
134. The 'Appropriate Curriculum' is designed for those pupils who will benefit from studying for two days a week in school and from work experience, a course at Coleg Gwent or a course with another approved provider, for the other three days a week.
135. The sixth form has an extensive choice of AS/A2 courses which are complemented by a number of vocationally-oriented courses. The school is an active member of the Newport '14-19 Learning Pathways' Consortium.
136. The school's determination to meet individual needs is exemplified by its willingness to design an individual learning pathway in special circumstances, ranging from medical reasons to fast-tracking pupils for external community languages' qualifications. Virtually all pupils leave St Joseph's with a qualification.
137. Extra-curricular activities make a significant contribution to the holistic development of the pupil. An extensive range of opportunities is provided for participation in sport, music, liturgy, drama, visits related to curricular subjects, foreign visits, theatre trips and competitions. There is a continuing, strong musical tradition, with successful senior and junior choirs and a school orchestra of 100 pupils.
138. The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It has created an ethos in which the vast majority of pupils enjoys school. This is reflected in the way pupils work together and show mutual respect. They display a caring, courteous attitude and a genuine concern for others. They recently raised £8,000 for charity. Acts of worship and weekly lessons in PSE make a strong contribution to pupils' and students' values.
139. The primary-secondary transition is strong with purposeful working relationships established between secondary and primary school teachers. There are established and developing transition programmes over Y5, Y6 and Y7 to cover both academic and pastoral bridges. The school received a WSSA award for its transition work. The cluster is used by the UA as an example of good practice.
140. Sixth formers make a significant contribution to whole-school initiatives in KS3 and KS4. They are involved in a number of schemes, such as mentoring Y11 pupils in study skills during PSE lessons and helping younger pupils in reading and numeracy. They play a leading role in the operation of the school council.

### **Good Features**

141. The school has established a strong meaningful partnership with parents which ensures maximum support for pupils. Appropriate parents' evenings are arranged which are well attended. The termly newsletter, which is a particularly

informative and attractive publication, is distributed to all parents, parishes, primary schools, the UA, local businesses and friends.

142. The development of pupils' key skills is planned, across the curriculum, and there are also numerous particular activities, such as numeracy week, which draw pupils' attention to the importance of key skills. In practice, this provision is effective in equipping pupils and students to access all areas of the curriculum successfully and in preparing them for lifelong learning.
143. The school meets the statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship.

### **Shortcomings**

144. There is insufficient timetabled provision for the delivery of the short-course GCSE Welsh second language. The provision of one hour per fortnight and four 'immersion' days affects continuity and progression in the language. The time allocation does not enable pupils to build on the good progress made in KS3 and reach the higher grades at GCSE.
145. A few classes in the sixth form contain over thirty pupils. This places a considerable weight on the teacher to deliver the curriculum and for each individual to receive the support he/she requires.
146. The effective delivery of the curriculum is hindered, in Y7 and Y8, in a number of subjects, and particularly in Welsh second language, by classes shared between two teachers. These arrangements mitigate against the efficient continuity of the pupils' learning programme and identification with an individual teacher, in terms of frequency of contact.

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

#### **Outstanding Features**

147. The promotion of sustainable development and global citizenship is well embedded in the life and work of the school, and in four areas in particular:
- the curriculum;
  - the environment;
  - the global community; and
  - the recycling of resources.
148. The school promotes the use of 'fair-trade' goods which has led to its selection as the location for the launch of the fair-trade initiative in February 2007 by the WAG First Minister. The pupils' Eco-Committee co-ordinates the initiatives, with the target of working towards a minimum waste and maximum recycling policy.
149. The outstanding progress has been recognised by the award of the Silver Eco-Award and the school is now working towards Green Flag status. It has been nominated for the Sustainable Schools' Award. A number of international links have been established with schools in China, Peru and Gambia and a visit is planned to Kenya.

150. The school has been awarded the second stage of the 'Healthy Schools Award' for work with 'Newport Wastesavers'. The healthier lifestyle for walkers and cyclists is being promoted by the 'Safe Routes to School' scheme.
151. The strong tradition of successful 'Young Enterprise' initiatives has been recognised, in that:
- in 2005/06 the school was the Newport area winner;
  - in the Gwent final it was awarded 'Best Product', 'Best Presentation' and was runner-up in 'Best Trade Stand'; and
  - the head student was a finalist in the Welsh Woman of the Year Award, 2006, for enterprise.
152. Enterprise education begins in Y7. Pupils in Y9 enjoy an organised 'Enterprise Week' during the summer term. This aspect of the curriculum demonstrates pupils' outstanding team-working and communication skills.
153. The school's inclusion strategy ensures that opportunities exist for all pupils to access all areas of the learning programme. This is illustrated in practice by, for example, the governing body's decision to finance peripatetic lessons from the school budget, allowing access for all pupils.
154. The school organises a very successful annual 'Racial Justice' week. All pupils are treated with respect and dignity, irrespective of background.
155. The breadth and quality of the curriculum, the introduction and development of 'Building Learning Power' as preparation for independent learning, the extra-curricular opportunities, taking account of WAG priorities and the work-related programme ensure that pupils' educational experiences reflect national priorities and lay the foundation for lifelong learning.

### **Good Features**

156. There is an effective WRE programme planned and delivered through the school's PSE scheme. Pupils benefit from an extensive careers education and guidance programme, of good quality, delivered in all key stages. All pupils and students are trained in the use of the Careers Wales on-line website.
157. All Y10 pupils and Y12 students undertake a comprehensive work-experience programme. This provides pupils with a valuable insight into the world of work. The programme is carefully monitored by members of staff.

### **Shortcomings**

158. Pupils' exposure to the Welsh language outside the Welsh department is limited. There is no policy to plan opportunities for pupils to use their bilingual skills in other areas of the wider curriculum.
159. The school has conducted an audit of the '*Cwricwlwm Cymreig*' leading to a report - '*Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig yn Ysgol Joseff Sant*'. Many departments have incorporated '*Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig*' in their schemes of work but it is not a strong feature of every department.

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

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

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

161. The **outstanding features** are the:

- very good personal relationships between staff and pupils, which are at the heart of pastoral care;
- many systems in place to monitor pupils, especially the effective use of information from the computerised data management system, to provide appropriate support quickly;
- school and year councils, which are involved in the management of the school to an unusual degree;
- transition and induction arrangements;
- development of pupils' personal, social and learning skills and promotion of healthy living;
- increase in the number of LSAs, their professional development and deployment, and the effectiveness of the support they provide;
- broadening of the provision for pupils with SEN, into an inclusion ethos, with emphasis on the needs of all;
- ease of access for disabled learners, throughout the building; and
- ethos of diversity by which different cultures are celebrated.

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

##### **Outstanding Features**

162. There is a strong sense of teamwork and commitment amongst all staff, to pastoral care. Senior managers, heads of year and form tutors are very generous in the amount of time they give, from the moment when they welcome pupils into school, off the buses, or on foot, in the morning. A meeting of form tutors, heads of year and key stage managers, before school begins, ensures that information is exchanged on a daily basis.

163. These daily briefings, together with information generated by the computerised data management system, have given staff access, quickly, to a wealth of data on pupils. Regular monitoring has led to more appropriate and speedy intervention, which gives greater support to pupils, opportunities for the use of praise and sanctions, and letters to parents, on a daily basis.

164. In the longer term, the progress of all pupils is also tracked effectively. Progress is measured against targets, underachievement is identified, the results of individuals and groups of pupils are analysed, and strategies are implemented to maximise potential. Strategies are many and varied and include literacy and numeracy intervention, the mentoring of all pupils in Y11 in groups of six, extension activities for the most able and mentoring of younger pupils by older ones, among many others. Pupils have a strong sense that staff work hard on their behalf and that they care.

165. The school council is unusually well-developed as a forum in which learners contribute to the self-evaluation of the school. A recent example is the council's discussion about the marking policy, and pupils' involvement in the grading of some self-evaluation reports by staff. The council plays an active role in the decision and policy-making process.
166. A well-planned induction programme for those entering the sixth form, held partly off-site at a higher education venue, and induction for those in Y9 and at the transition between Y6/Y7 ensure that pupils and students are fully informed of changes. The school also provides induction evenings for parents on learning styles and how best to support their child.
167. The development of pupils' personal, social and learning skills is at the heart of the school's ethos. Acts of worship, weekly lessons in PSE and lessons across the curriculum inform and invite a response. The school has also done much to ensure that healthy food is available. The dining room is a very attractive area, with many pupils choosing to eat healthily.

### **Good Feature**

168. The child protection co-ordinator is correctly appointed and staff are well aware of procedures that must be followed.

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

#### **Outstanding Features**

169. Since the last inspection, the school has increased significantly the number of LSAs. There are 12 highly-skilled staff, effectively deployed, some to particular departments, who give outstanding support to individuals, small groups and classes.
170. Early identification of need, good use of outside agencies and the flexible provision of support ensure that pupils make very good progress. The school is developing significantly as a centre committed to inclusion.
171. The group of pupils at KS4, whose behaviour impedes progress, is very well catered for, with flexible off-site provision. Their attendance has improved.
172. The sixth-form "Buddy" scheme involves over a hundred sixth formers and supports younger pupils in literacy and numeracy.
173. Disabled learners have access to all parts of the building, through the provision of a lift.

### **Good Feature**

174. Work is well matched to ability in classes across the curriculum and progress is recorded systematically.

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

#### **Outstanding Features**

175. All pupils interviewed spoke of the school as a "telling school", in which rare incidents of bullying and harassment would be reported by pupils. Systems are in place to counteract bullying and the 'Anti-Bullying Week' raises awareness of the dangers of bullying.

176. 'Building Learning Power' is having a very positive impact on how all pupils see themselves as independent learners. It is well embedded and pupils speak confidently of its usefulness.
177. The policy of inclusion and the very strong Christian ethos, of caring for each other, turn 'respecting diversity' from an abstract concept into a practical experience for pupils. A very good example is "Our Global School Board". Pupils are invited to bring photographs of themselves and place them on to a world map, pinpointing their country of origin. Through this board, the richness of sharing in diversity, through pupils' questioning and discussion, is evident. Pupils take pride in their school and in its' richness of cultures.

### **Good Features**

178. Able and talented pupils are identified by each department and enrichment activities are in place.
179. Pupils with EAL receive effective support teaching, though provision is limited.

## **Leadership and management**

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

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

180. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.
181. The **outstanding features** are the:
- inspirational leadership of the headteacher;
  - strong, corporate ethos and values, shared with all associated with the school;
  - fulfilment of the mission statement in practice;
  - vision and strategic planning of the governing body, together with very good monitoring and evaluation, including evaluation of their own performance;
  - very able leadership of the senior leadership team;
  - enthusiasm, professional development and generous commitment of middle managers and the key role they play in continuing improvement;
  - progress on the WAG priorities, quality of delivery in practice and receipt of national awards; and
  - improvement, consistently across the school, and the current levels of achievement, teaching and learning.

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

#### **Outstanding Features**

182. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She is at the heart of the consistent improvements since the last inspection in standards, teaching and learning and in the creation of a vibrant learning community. She also leads by

example in setting the values, of worship, of mutual respect, and of inclusion, to the extent that the mission statement of “Serving God by learning together” is widely fulfilled in practice.

183. This is achieved through clear vision and direction, through the professional development of teaching and support staff, through an open-door policy and very good personal relationships and through continuous monitoring of practice and planning for improvement.
184. Pupils and students are involved in and committed to the management, learning and ethos of the school, to an unusual degree. There are very good relationships between staff and pupils to the extent, for example, that pupils and students grade some staff self-evaluation reports and have a real influence on practice.
185. The school's values are shared with and by parents and the wider community, who also contribute to the school's self-evaluation and planning.
186. In all of these areas, the headteacher is very ably supported by the senior leadership team. Each has clearly defined responsibilities, with emphasis on developing the school through the implementation of the WAG priorities. These are largely embedded, with national awards received for transition arrangements, healthy living, and sustainable development, for example. The inclusion agenda is more embedded than in most schools and there has been appropriate planning for the implementation of learning pathways.
187. The introduction of a computerised data system, implemented quickly and effectively, is having a significant impact on the effectiveness of management in monitoring and dealing with issues on a daily basis, as well as in the longer term. The use made of the data is innovative and indicative of highly effective management at all levels of the school. It is also a reflection of the commitment to pastoral care and generous giving of time, by all members of staff.
188. Middle managers, academic and pastoral, also play a key role in the success of the school, in standards, teaching, learning, care and support and in the very good relationships which are prevalent. Middle managers are committed to continuing professional development, to reflecting on performance and to innovation and improvement. Their enthusiasm, as that of senior managers, is motivational. There is strong sense of teamwork across the school.
189. The quality of middle management is very good overall, with further development planned for those who are newly in post this year. Middle managers and staff are involved in a number of working groups, to take initiatives forward.
190. There is a strong drive, at all levels of management, for continuing improvement. Challenging targets are set and met, for examination results, for teaching and learning and for all aspects of provision and practice. The senior management team (the senior leadership team and key middle managers) reviews progress against targets, regularly, in its meetings.

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

### Outstanding Features

191. Since the last inspection, the governing body has been involved in the strategic planning for building a new school, which opened on time and within budget, in November 2004.
192. Governors are involved in all aspects of strategic planning, with detailed analyses of projected numbers and with careful financial planning for increasing resources.
193. They also have a comprehensive and detailed knowledge of the school, based both on data and on first-hand evidence. Many are linked to departments. Governors are highly supportive of the school but also act effectively as 'critical friends'.
194. The committee structure is effective in enabling governors to be fully informed and take a leading role in decision-making in all key areas.
195. Before the last inspection, governors had begun to review their own practice and performance. This has developed, with one committee now devoted to self-review.
196. The links with senior and middle managers are open and effective, within the school's ethos of very good relationships and drive for continuing improvement.
197. The two head students are associate governors and play an active part in the deliberations of the governing body.
198. All regulatory and legal requirements are met.

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

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

199. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.
200. The **outstanding features** are the:
  - strong culture of self-evaluation which assesses all aspects of the school's work;
  - large number of well-structured lesson observations conducted by heads of department and line managers which feed into the review process;
  - involvement of all members of teaching and support staff in the review process;
  - detailed reports, on each department, produced by middle managers and the school review team;
  - active encouragement of pupils' and students' voice in the school's review process and that of some departments, and in planning for improvement;
  - governors' self-evaluation of their own effectiveness;

- rigorous and detailed analysis of examination results and test data contained within the annual departmental review of results;
- improvement in standards resulting from the reviews, and in the key issues from the last inspection report;
- evaluation of data from Fischer Family Trust, Yellis and Alis, and its use in planning for improvement;
- strong links between performance management, improvement plans and funding for continuing professional development, for all categories of staff; and
- clear links between capitation and priorities in departmental improvement plans.

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

### **Outstanding Features**

201. The school's self-evaluation report is an extremely detailed document outlining the school's performance against the seven key questions of the 'Common Inspection Framework'. The headteacher, senior leadership team and middle managers have a detailed and thorough knowledge of standards and of the quality of teaching and learning across the school. This is based on first-hand information and numerous, regular lesson observations. The quality of their self-evaluation is confirmed by the inspection team's findings, which match the school's own grading for each key question.
202. All members of staff contribute to the self-evaluation process and this is an integral part of the success of the findings, and of the quality of the process. The headteacher and the senior leadership team work to support middle managers and to ensure the full participation, in the review process, of every member of the teaching and support staff. Reviews of each department are rigorous, detailed and comprehensive and lead to action planning.
203. The school has nurtured and developed the policy of listening to learners. The contribution of the student voice to evaluation and planning is positively encouraged via the year and school council meetings. Pupils' and students' views on the recent school improvement plan were sought and several departments involve pupils in their self-evaluation process. Pupils were involved in discussions on what makes a good lesson as part of the development of the 'Building Learning Power' programme. The views of parents on the transfer arrangements from KS2 to KS3, and on the school's option system, are regularly sought by means of questionnaires.
204. Governors have good knowledge and understanding of the school and its performance. They are linked to departments and contribute to the self-evaluation process within these departments. Governors have established their own self-review arrangements and, as a consequence, have a very good awareness of their own effectiveness.

### **Good Features**

205. Each department and area has carried out a self-evaluation based on the seven key questions of the Common Inspection Framework, where areas in need of improvement are identified. All departments annually analyse the

results of tests and examinations within their departmental review. The school collects and stores information on the performance of individual pupils on the new computerised database, which is easily accessible to staff.

206. Detailed monitoring arrangements exist to support newly-qualified teachers and teachers on initial training. As part of the school's monitoring procedures, heads of year review pupils' books and planners and occasionally undertake pupil pursuits.

### **Shortcomings**

207. The quality of the departmental self-evaluation reports is variable. Some do not focus sufficiently on teaching and learning nor clearly identify areas for improvement and action points.
208. The practice of seeking pupils' views as part of all departments' self-evaluation is not consistent across the school.

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

#### **Outstanding Features**

209. The school has made very good progress in addressing the key issues identified in the previous report:
- standards have risen in the subjects that were judged to be satisfactory, as reported elsewhere in this report;
  - standards in information technology at KS3 have improved from unsatisfactory to good;
  - rigorous monitoring of classroom practice, from first-hand evidence of lesson observation, is now common across the school;
  - curricular provision for design and technology has been addressed, while that for Welsh second language has been met at KS3; and
  - health and safety issues related to the previous site have been resolved.
210. Detailed analysis of data, including test and examination results, Fischer Family Trust, Yellis and Alis predictions, informs planning and development across the school and confirms that, year on year, the actions taken to bring about improvements have resulted in clearly measurable gains. There have been outstanding improvements in test and examination results and in the quality of teaching at the school since the last report.
211. The system for linking priorities to capitation is particularly robust. Requests for continuing professional development are approved, if specifically linked to priorities identified from performance management, or to the school's or departmental plans.
212. The school council has its own version of the school improvement plan and is involved in implementing change.

#### **Good Features**

213. Accurate and challenging targets set for examination performance together with regular monitoring of pupils' progress have contributed positively to test and examination results.

214. The school improvement plan is a three-year plan, produced after widespread consultation with all interested parties. The plan is very thorough and detailed and is based on the seven key questions. The school has made great progress in raising standards and is now planning to help pupils become more effective learners by rightly setting 'Building Learning Power' as one of its main priorities, together with assessment for learning and development of ICT and key skills.
215. Departmental improvement plans follow the model of the school improvement plan and identify a wide range of priorities. They reflect the school's priorities as well as subject-specific needs, though not all contain the points for action identified from self-evaluation.

### **Shortcomings**

216. An excessive number of priorities are identified within both the school and departmental plans. The plans cover three years; supplementary one-year plans would provide a sharper focus to the school's planning.
217. Although there has been an improvement in the standards achieved in Welsh at KS4 since the last inspection, the issue of curricular provision for Welsh at KS4, identified in the last report, remains.

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

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

218. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade.
219. The **outstanding features** are the:
- contribution made by the headteacher, staff and governors to the design of the new school;
  - quality of the accommodation and facilities available to pupils;
  - contribution made by governors in providing peripatetic music support;
  - dedication of the headteacher and staff, in ensuring that school resources support individual pupils' needs;
  - commitment of all support staff in aiding the learning process for pupils;
  - high percentage of sixth formers who are committed to helping and supporting younger pupils in their learning;
  - importance the school places on the continuing professional development of all staff, teaching and support; and
  - pro-active role that the experienced and knowledgeable governing body plays in evaluating the use of resources and their effectiveness.

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

#### **Outstanding Features**

220. The new school was built on time and to budget. The headteacher, governors and staff visited a range of schools, to examine how building design should

support learning and lead to ease of management. The actual design adopted has greatly aided learning and pupils and students speak of the benefits it provides.

221. Accommodation is of a high standard, with well-furnished teaching bases. The school is fully equipped for disabled learners. The sixth-form common room and study area, with ICT facilities, support a flourishing sixth form.
222. The governors' support for any pupils wishing to learn to play an instrument has ensured that 150 pupils have the opportunity to take part in orchestra, musicals and a range of associated activity. A wide range of instrumental tuition, including singing coaches, is on offer.
223. The school's mission statement is best seen where individual pupils have been supported in activities, where they might not have had the opportunity, because of financial, social or physical concerns.

### **Good Features**

224. There are sufficient, qualified, specialist teachers, who are supported in their work by a substantial number of LSAs, technicians, foreign language assistants, administrative staff and cover supervisors.
225. Capitation levels are generous and subject areas are well stocked. Computer provision has improved since the last inspection. The computer to pupil ratio is now 5 to 1. Facilities are good and are heavily used. There is a 92% usage rate of the three ICT rooms. The mobile wireless trolleys, which each carry fifteen laptops, service pupils' and students' needs across a wide range of subjects. Provision of equipment in control technology and in the number of sewing machines for textiles is now good.
226. The LRC is staffed to ensure that it meets the needs of both individuals and classes. It is used for a very high percentage of the week. It is also open at break and lunch times. The stock is attractive and up-to-date. Borrowing has significantly increased since the time of the last inspection. Additional fiction is provided through the county library service. The LRC provides a good range of quality newspapers, as well as a popular children's paper. The computer facilities are well used. There is a clear school policy on the use of the LRC and a member of the senior team evaluates progress annually.
227. The PTAFAs, whilst small, are active and raise additional finance to support learning.
228. Extra-curricular activities are wide and varied and add quality to pupils' experiences.
229. Classroom display is of a good standard.
230. Health and safety issues mentioned in the last inspection report have been resolved. Storage, safe entry for pedestrians, designated car-parking and bus drop-off zones have all been built into the new school's design. The site manager ensures that relevant logbooks are kept and that all issues are promptly dealt with. The site is covered by CCTV. All staff have been checked by the criminal records' bureau CRB. There is a named equal opportunity governor and member of staff. Twenty-nine staff are trained in first-aid.

## **Shortcomings**

231. There is no improvement plan for the LRC. The librarian and senior leadership link member do not meet formally, within the year, to highlight successes, plan developments and produce a draft budget. However, they have recognised the need for a data-logging system for both books and borrowers.

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

### **Outstanding Features**

232. The involvement of support staff in the life of the school is exceptional. They are clearly focused upon pupils' needs and learning, very well deployed and often exceed expectations, in their commitment and expertise.

233. Over 100 sixth formers are engaged in supporting the learning of younger pupils, including some who are in Y11. Sixth formers assist with reading, other basic skills, mentoring and with sport. There is very much a family atmosphere in the school.

234. Continuing professional development is well managed and tracked by a deputy headteacher, who ensures that all staff are engaged and that benefits are passed on to colleagues. Two senior leaders hold the NPQH and a third is beginning the course. Several teachers are undertaking Masters' degrees and a number of staff are learning Welsh. Eight learning support assistants will shortly complete the NVQ level 3 and one is undertaking a degree. Another already holds a degree. The school has, again, received the Investors in People award.

235. Governors annually review all aspects of the school's life, including staffing, service-level agreements, health and safety and examination results. They also review their own effectiveness. They ensure value for money. The chairman plays a particularly active role. Many governors are regularly in school.

### **Good Features**

236. Workload reforms and remodelling have been well managed by the headteacher, with a governors/staff working party contributing to a successful outcome. Arrangements for PPA time, external examination invigilation, and cover arrangements have been made. PPA time is well used. There is a rationale for the teaching and learning responsibility structure and there are relevant job descriptions.

237. The school has a large number of newly-qualified teachers and staff in their first few years of teaching. They are effectively monitored and supported by subject leaders and by the senior mentor.

238. For the most part, teachers are deployed economically and efficiently, so that the best use is made of their time and expertise.

239. The sixth-form curriculum is well constructed and enables students to achieve successful outcomes. It is very cost-effective.

240. The school's mission statement and school improvement plan are at the heart of decision-making. They enrich the everyday working life of the school. Governors, senior and middle managers carry out annual reviews of performance.

241. The budget is skilfully managed by the bursar, headteacher and governors.  
Value for money is given.

### **Shortcomings**

242. There are a few large AS level classes. In the long term, there is a danger of undue pressure on teachers as well as of standards being affected.

243. There is a significant number of classes, in Y7 and Y8, which are shared between two teachers, and particularly in Welsh second language.

244. There are no data available on the achievement of each ethnic minority group. Trends cannot therefore be seen and neither can the school and relevant authority ensure that the correct level of funding is available.

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

### **English**

**Key stage 3 – Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

**Key stage 4 – Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

#### **Key Stage 3**

##### **Outstanding Features**

245. Pupils make very good progress in their learning, because they are well motivated and enthusiastic. This is reflected in their attainment at the end of the key stage.

246. In group-work and role plays, pupils collaborate very effectively. They show consideration for the ideas of others, advocate mature points of view about a wide range of texts and they sustain lively discussions and character roles.

##### **Good Features**

247. Most pupils speak clearly and show a developing awareness that speech varies according to audience and purpose.

248. They read and view a range of texts for pleasure and research. They read aloud with fluency and expression and they show good understanding of what they read.

249. They analyse the structure and language features of texts, orally and in writing, using appropriate technical language.

250. Pupils' writing skills are good. They plan and draft their work successfully, write in a range of forms and show awareness of audience and purpose. They can reflect on their work in groups and independently and they present their ideas accurately, sometimes using ICT.

##### **Shortcomings**

251. Some more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

252. Boys do not achieve as well as girls.

#### **Key Stage 4**

### **Outstanding Features**

253. Some pupils show sophisticated learning skills. They can:

- collaborate very effectively in groups;
- explore, challenge and evaluate ideas about a range of texts with maturity; and
- present their ideas to others confidently, showing clear awareness of audience and purpose.

### **Good Features**

254. Pupils make good progress in English language and literature and this is reflected in results at GCSE.

255. They use assessment objectives and level descriptors effectively to monitor the quality of their work.

256. They read a range of texts and show good understanding of what they read. They can explore the language features of text and they use technical vocabulary accurately.

257. Most pupils produce purposeful and sustained writing that is accurate and well presented.

### **Shortcomings**

258. At the end of the key stage, boys do not attain as well as girls.

259. During speaking and listening activities, a small number of pupils is passive and disengaged.

## **Sixth Form – Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

### **Outstanding Features**

260. Students attain very good results in AS and A2 examinations.

261. They are outstanding in their capacity to:

- work together confidently and collaboratively to explore complex themes and concepts;
- use close textual knowledge and analysis to justify their opinions; and
- present their ideas to others, showing awareness of audience and purpose.

### **Good Features**

262. Students read a wide range of demanding texts and they show very good understanding of language theory.

263. They produce sophisticated and mature written work. They reflect skilfully on their writing, making appropriate amendments to ensure accurate final presentations of their work.

### **Shortcomings**

264. There are no significant shortcomings.

## **All key stages**

265. Pupils and students with SEN and EAL achieve very well.

## **Welsh second language**

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

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

### **Key Stage 3**

#### **Good Features**

266. Most pupils offer brief but accurate responses in oral exchanges. They pronounce familiar vocabulary correctly and build on language patterns acquired in the lesson.
267. When practising in pairs, pupils are prepared to participate, and extend their questions and answers further by filling in questionnaires.
268. Most pupils listen well to the teacher and to each other. They understand short passages based on vocabulary already acquired and complete tasks which require information.
269. Reading skills are being developed and pupils read aloud in class confidently. Reading is confined to short extracts and pupils complete comprehension questions or find specific information from the reading passage.
270. Pupils consolidate oral work when completing their written work. A number of related written tasks, such as short paragraphs, questions and answers and structured exercises, are completed accurately.
271. Pupils complete a good variety of written work, expressing factual and personal information and opinions about different hobbies, to a good standard.
272. More able pupils can extend both oral and written tasks.
273. Pupils with SEN and EAL make good progress over the key stage.

#### **Shortcomings**

274. A small minority of pupils is uncertain in their oral responses. They lack fluency when communicating and tend to rely heavily on their notes.
275. A small minority of pupils of lower ability has difficulty in written work and produces work which is inaccurate and brief.
276. The more able pupils do not produce extended pieces for different purposes using a range of patterns and a wider vocabulary, especially in Y9 as they progress to KS4.

### **Key Stage 4**

#### **Good Features**

277. More able pupils use familiar sentence patterns fairly confidently when conveying information. They discuss certain topics, using familiar sentence patterns and respond well when practising language in pairs.

278. Pupils of lower ability have a reasonable understanding of the spoken and written language.
279. All pupils are encouraged to read aloud and although the less able pupils have some difficulty with pronunciation, they persevere. Pupils following the full course show a good understanding of reading material and respond to the material by completing written tasks accurately
280. Pupils complete, successfully, a fairly good variety of written tasks based on the need of the external examination - descriptive paragraphs, letters containing personal details, and short dialogues.
281. More able pupils, on the GCSE full course, complete well-planned, extended written tasks. The less able complete short paragraphs, dialogues and basic language exercises.
282. Pupils with SEN and EAL are well supported and make progress.

### **Shortcomings**

283. In oral work, pupils of lower ability have difficulty recalling language previously learnt. They contribute briefly and lack the fluency to converse with confidence.
284. Pupils across the ability range make very little use of incidental language in their lessons.
285. Many pupils on the GCSE short course mispronounce simple words when reading and read slowly without expression.
286. The written work of a majority of pupils on the GCSE short course is brief and very limited in scope and challenge.
287. Pupils on the GCSE short course receive restricted teaching time and experience some difficulties in retaining what they learn. They are unable to build on progress made in KS3.

### **Sixth Form**

288. There are currently no students taking courses in Welsh second language in the sixth form.

<b>Science</b>
----------------

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

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

### **Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4**

#### **Good Features**

289. Most pupils achieve good standards. They respond appropriately during question and answer sessions, showing good knowledge and understanding of previous work.
290. The vast majority of pupils listens attentively during class discussions. Some pupils provide extended answers to questions and ask questions which promote discussions, leading to better understanding of topics in science.

- 291. Pupils show a good attitude towards practical work. They work safely, follow instructions carefully and have an awareness of the need to make risk assessments before starting practical work.
- 292. They generally make accurate observations and measurements, using appropriate units of measurement and recording their results clearly in tables.
- 293. Good progress is made by pupils with SEN and EAL.
- 294. Pupils develop a good understanding of the contribution made by science to everyday life and to industry, and have an awareness of the impact science can have on industry, the environment and the economy.

### **Shortcomings**

- 295. The standards reached by a minority of pupils, particularly the more able at KS4, are not sufficiently high.
- 296. The work and exercise books of a small minority of pupils are untidy, disorganized and incomplete. The progress of these pupils is hindered by missing or incomplete work.

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

#### **Good Features**

- 297. Most students have a good knowledge and understanding of scientific principles and can discuss these intelligently and confidently using scientific terms accurately and appropriately.
- 298. The majority of students is able to apply understanding well, in answers to examination questions.
- 299. Students' files are mostly complete and orderly and provide a good reference and revision resource, which enhances their understanding.
- 300. In practical work observed, students achieve good standards overall.

#### **Shortcomings**

- 301. Some students do not easily recall basic scientific principles, covered at KS4.

<b>Information technology</b>
-------------------------------

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

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

#### **Key Stage 3**

#### **Good Features**

- 302. Pupils use a wide range of applications, with growing confidence, in subject-based tasks. They have a clear sense of purpose and can make an appropriate choice of application for purpose.
- 303. They use a variety of software tools to organise, edit, integrate and present information in a variety of formats, to a good quality.

- 304. Pupils prepare and organise data for entry into a database or spreadsheet. They use queries, that become increasingly more complex, to interrogate the data.
- 305. They develop a good understanding of formulae, to calculate and manipulate number and can explore the effects of changing variables.
- 306. Generally, pupils display a good sense of audience and present information in different ways, to suit the context and needs of different audiences.
- 307. They show good understanding of the impact of ICT, the dangers and how ICT can be used to enhance their work.

### **Shortcomings**

- 308. A small minority of pupils does not make sufficient progress. They do not achieve their potential in ICT, in the development of skills and understanding, because they are not sufficiently challenged by the tasks set in some subjects.

### **Key Stage 4**

#### **Outstanding Features**

- 309. A high percentage of pupils, entered for the GCSE applied ICT double award examination, gains one grade or better above their predicted grade.
- 310. Pupils develop well as independent learners over the key stage. This is evident in the quality of the unit drafts they produce, in the way they provide in-depth analyses in the written content of their work and in their confidence in the use of a wide range of software applications.

#### **Good Features**

- 311. Pupils use a wide range of software application tools to research, collate, prepare and present information from a wide variety of sources.
- 312. Research work is undertaken on the Internet by pupils, using a wide range of search engines and links to find the information they require.
- 313. Pupils create questionnaires to collect data for a range of work with a database context and produce good quality data capture sheets to input data correctly. They use a range of validation tests to ensure the accuracy of the data.
- 314. Pupils use complex lines of enquiry to interrogate their data, to answer key questions. They provide sound written explanations to present their results.
- 315. They use complex formulae and procedures, to develop spreadsheets appropriate to a business context and to create models and simulations.
- 316. Pupils plan their unit assignments well, and can explain their choice of software appropriate to the context. Many pupils bring a good level of aesthetic awareness to the quality of the final presentation of their work.

### **Shortcomings**

- 317. A very small minority of pupils produces assignments of a weaker quality, in content and presentation, and this is reflected in their final grade.

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

### **Good Features**

- 318. Students base their work on real business and community contexts. They research a variety of sources to explore, collate and organise data appropriate to each context.
- 319. They demonstrate a good understanding of the principles of numerical modelling. Work is well planned to design simulations of business systems that include the use of complex formulae to make detailed calculations.
- 320. Students use and understand a range of validation tests and input masks, to ensure the accuracy of data entered. They understand and use data correlation analysis and use complex queries to interrogate data for analysis.
- 321. Students understand the features of commercial websites and can evaluate their use, demonstrating good understanding of the main aesthetic qualities of presenting information to an audience.
- 322. Students make good use of annotated notes to explain their work as it develops, their choices in format for presentation and their reasons for amendments. This shows good understanding of the processes involved and they produce work of good quality.

### **Shortcomings**

- 323. A small minority of students loses marks through a less than thorough approach to key aspects of the coursework, including the depth of coverage and detail, and the quality of the presentation.

### **All key stages**

- 324. Pupils with SEN work well on appropriately levelled tasks, which ensure that they make good progress and they understand their achievement, on the completion of each task. Pupils in KS4 and students in the sixth form complete stepped tasks, with clear deadlines and achieve well.
- 325. Pupils with EAL achieve well.

<b>Geography</b>
------------------

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

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

### **Key Stage 3**

#### **Good Features**

- 326. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the relationship between mankind and the environment. Their study of the Kayopo tribe in the Amazon Basin contributes significantly to their understanding of the dependence of mankind on the environment and the importance of employing sustainable practices.
- 327. Pupils' range of geographical skills is good. They use maps, diagrams, printed material and ICT applications with confidence.

328. Most pupils demonstrate a sound grasp of the definition of tourism. They distinguish accurately between the type of tourist and the type of holiday. They understand the factors responsible for the phenomenal growth of the tourist industry since the 1960's.
329. Pupils with SEN and EAL complete work of a good standard. They apply a range of geographical skills to complete set tasks.
330. The majority of pupils recognises the differing characteristics of residential areas within an urban area, using house types as their criterion. They understand the major characteristics of the CBD. Most pupils apply, accurately, house types to the appropriate urban zone.

### **Shortcomings**

331. A minority of pupils is insecure in their knowledge of place.
332. The most able do not always produce work which reflects their ability.

### **Key Stage 4**

#### **Good Features**

333. Most pupils can classify, into human and physical factors, the requirements of intensive rice cultivation in South East Asia. With few exceptions, pupils accurately label a photograph highlighting the appropriate human and physical statements.
334. Pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of the processes at work in the formation of a waterfall. They explain in detail the four stages of waterfall formation and its retreat upstream. They draw annotated diagrams to illustrate the process at work.
335. Coursework assignments, completed on the Afon Llwyd, demonstrate pupils' skills of analysis and interpretation of raw data. They present their findings in a variety of formats such as written, graphical, map and, where appropriate, use ICT well.
336. The standard of geographical skills is good. Pupils use maps, photographs and written material with confidence, achieving good outcomes.
337. Pupils with SEN and EAL achieve well.

### **Shortcomings**

338. A minority of pupils does not have sufficient grasp of some key geographical terms used in their studies.
339. A significant number of pupils' work lacks depth in the completion of set tasks.

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

#### **Good Features**

340. Students demonstrate a good understanding of the processes and patterns in physical geography. They have a secure grasp of the dominant processes of erosion involved in the formation of various types of landforms, such as waterfalls, v-shaped valleys, potholes and meanders.

341. Most students use complex geographical terminology with accuracy. They apply the vocabulary appropriately and accurately both orally and in the completion of set written tasks.
342. Students have a sound grasp of the advantages and disadvantages of decentralisation, when applied to the location of retail and other services. They understand the strategies introduced to reverse the decline experienced in the CBD.
343. The majority of students uses maps, statistical data, graphical information and printed material with confidence in response to set tasks.
344. Students demonstrate an understanding of the reasons for new and expanding areas of manufacturing industry in the UK, despite the decline in the number employed in manufacturing since 1979.

### **Shortcomings**

345. The work of a number of students lacks the depth of knowledge and detail expected in AS/A2 courses of study.

<b>Music</b>
--------------

**Key Stage 3 - Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

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

### **Key Stage 3**

#### **Outstanding Features**

346. Pupils make very good progress in lessons because they have regular opportunities to engage in music-making.
347. Pupils' skills in performing and improvising are very well developed in different units of work.
348. Pupils sing to a good standard, because singing is a regular part of the course in Y7, Y8 and Y9.

#### **Good Features**

349. Pupils sing in tune with confidence and accuracy in lessons and can sing in parts.
350. Performing on a variety of instruments, pupils show sensitivity and expression.
351. Pupils improvise both instrumentally and vocally with confidence and produce compositions which are musically interesting and varied.
352. When listening to music, they show a good knowledge of the elements of music and musical vocabulary.
353. Pupils with SEN and EAL achieve well in music.

### **Shortcomings**

354. Less able pupils are unable to give extended answers in class, whilst involved in listening and appraising tasks.
355. The lack of access to computers limits the range of composing work in the classroom.

## **Key Stage 4**

### **Good Features**

- 356. Pupils show a sound knowledge of the different genres of Welsh music in listening tasks.
- 357. The most able pupils have a good understanding of musical vocabulary to enhance their responses to composing and performing work.
- 358. Pupils with SEN and EAL achieve well.
- 359. Pupils perform in a wide range of styles to produce expressive and accurate performances.
- 360. Their compositions show a great deal of variety and are enhanced by the use of computers.

### **Shortcomings**

- 361. The least able pupils do not make sufficient progress in listening and appraising skills.

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

### **Good Features**

- 362. Students show a good understanding of technical musical vocabulary in their listening exercises.
- 363. Students with SEN and EAL achieve well.
- 364. Students show a good knowledge of root progression chords, cadences and Baroque harmonic progressions when composing.
- 365. Students' own compositions show a good level of technical skill and musical expression. The use of a variety of computer programmes helps students revise and refine their own work.
- 366. The most able students perform to a high standard with fluency, accuracy and expression.
- 367. They show a good understanding of their set works and analytical competence.

### **Shortcomings**

- 368. There are no significant shortcomings.

## School's response to the inspection

The headteacher, staff and governors welcome the Estyn report following the inspection undertaken in January 2007, and the findings that **“St Joseph’s RC High School, Newport, is a very good school with many outstanding features”**.

We are delighted that our outstanding features are in all key areas and represent continuing and significant progress since the last inspection. The award of the highest grade 1 in all seven key questions is an extremely positive endorsement, and recognises the many outstanding features of our school. The grades affirm our strategies for raising standards and the work of our teachers, support staff, governors and pupils.

The outstanding quality of leadership at all levels of management has had a positive impact on standards. Public examination results at all key stages and standards as observed in lessons by inspectors were judged to be outstanding.

Our ethos is extremely important and it is pleasing to note that the inspectors recognised our strong sense of inclusion, shared values, teamwork and the quality of relationships. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was highlighted as an outstanding feature. The inspectors recognised that we have developed a vibrant and purposeful learning community with a strong emphasis on improving standards and developing the whole child. As an inclusive school we were extremely pleased that the report acknowledges that pupils and students of all abilities and backgrounds do well at the school.

The school has focused on developing quality teaching and learning, therefore it is particularly pleasing that the inspectors recognised the quality of teaching as an outstanding feature, with 89% of lessons graded 1 or 2. Teachers and support assistants were reported as highly committed to the values of the school and enthusiastic about teaching. The work the school has implemented in developing effective learners was also seen as outstanding.

We are very proud of our pupils and we are delighted that the report identifies as outstanding, the extent to which pupils take responsibility for their own learning, that they assume a high degree of responsibility for their progress and show motivation, resilience and independence in working towards realising their potential. Pupils’ behaviour and attitudes are exceptionally good and this was confirmed by the inspectors.

To complement the quality of the classroom experience, the breadth of our extra curricular programme and the promotion of pupils’ personal development are also seen as outstanding features.

The report acknowledges that the budget is skilfully managed and the school provides value for money.

Our thriving sixth form’s curriculum was judged to be well constructed, very cost effective and enabled the pupils to achieve successful outcomes.

We are pleased that the inspectors have acknowledged the very good progress made on the key issues from the last inspection, improving standards across the curriculum, improving ICT at KS3, ensuring departmental monitoring is consistently rigorous and increasing curricular time for both design and technology and Welsh at

KS3. The provision of Welsh in KS4 remains a focus of our current school improvement plan.

We welcome the recommendations in the report, which feature in our school improvement plan; they will enable us to build upon our current successes. We are not complacent and believe that our self evaluation, reflective practices and desire for excellence places us on course for further improvement.

The school wishes to acknowledge the fair, professional and comprehensive approach of the inspection team under the leadership of the Registered Inspector.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	St Josephs RC High School
School type	Voluntary
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Address of school	Pencarn Way Tredegar Park Newport
Postcode	NP10 8YS
Telephone number	01633 653110

Headteacher	Miss S M Jenkins
Date of appointment	01.04.97
Chair of governors	Mr P Bennett
Reporting inspector	Miss G M Owen
Dates of inspection	22.01.07 – 25.01.07

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Year group	Y 7	Y 8	Y 9	Y 10	Y 11	Y 12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	231	231	224	230	235	147	89	1387

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	73	2	74.3

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	18.76:1
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	
Average teaching group size	24.48
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	76.47%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole School
Term 1	91.5	89.8	91.1	90.3	89.2	92.9	89.5	90.6
Term 2	93.1	90.5	90.2	89.8	97.5	97.4	96	92.7
Term 3	94.5	93.9	92.1	93.6	93.3	96.0	93.3	93.7

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	14.5
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	40 temp 2 perm

### 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	0	4	10	51	27	6	1
		National	1	0	0	0	2	8	21	35	24	8	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	3	12	16	39	22	6
		National	1	0	0	0	1	6	18	24	32	15	0
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	0	0	0	0	2	13	45	30	10	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  
F Pupils who have failed to register a level for reasons other than absence  
W Pupils who are working towards level 1

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language)			
By Teacher Assessment			
In the school	76	In Wales	58

#### 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	198
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	42

<b>The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2006:</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>UA</b>	<b>Wales</b>
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	92	87	88
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	59	49	54
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	90	84	86
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	42	39	41
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	98	96	98
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	81	71	77
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent	95	91	93
attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent	5	9	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	3	3	3
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1	1		
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2			

<b>For pupils aged 16, 17 and 18, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs</b>	
Number of pupils aged 16, 17 and 18 in January 2006	204
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2006	77
Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2006	21

	<b>School</b>	<b>UA</b>	<b>Wales</b>
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C	62	64	68
Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E	95	94	94
Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects	19	19	20
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ at level 2	1		
Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Advanced or NVQ at level 3			

## Appendix 4

### Evidence base of the inspection

13 inspectors spent a total of 47 days in the school and were joined by one of the school's deputy headteachers as nominee. They held a meeting before the inspection.

During the inspection, inspectors visited:

- 129 lessons, 92 in the six subjects inspected and 37 in other subjects;
- registrations and assemblies;
- some extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team met with:

- staff, parents and governors before the inspection.
- the chairman of governors, the UA link adviser, 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;
- 116 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
Miss Glynis Owen	Rgl: Context, Summary, Recommendations, KQ1, KQ5, Appendix
Mr Michael Heylings	Core: KQ2
Mr Huw Llewelyn	Core: KQ3; geography
Mrs Ann Norbury	Core:KQ4
Dr Keith Davies	Core: KQ6 ; science
Mr Angus Dunphy	Core: KQ7
Mrs Helen Adams	Lay Inspector; contributing to all key questions
Mrs Jennifer Williams	English
Mrs Hefina Thomas	Science (s)
Mrs Heulwen Jones	Welsh second language
Mrs Jane Down	Information Technology
Mr Dylan Gwyer Roberts	Music
Mrs Janet Glover	Peer Assessor; contributing to all key questions
Mrs Patricia Landers	Nominee

### ***Acknowledgement***

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

#### **Contractor**

EPPC/Severn Crossing Ltd  
Suite H  
Britannic House  
Britannic Way  
Llandarcy  
Neath  
SA10 6JQ