

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

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

**Ysgol Clywedog  
Ruthin Road  
Wrexham  
LL13 7UB**

**School Number: 6654049**

**Date of Inspection: 05 March 2007**

**by**

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Ysgol Clywedog 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 Ysgol Clywedog took place between 05/03/07 and 08/03/07. An independent team of inspectors, led by Terence Andrew O'Marah undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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 **full** inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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## **Context**

### **The nature of the provider**

- 1 The school enjoys excellent modern facilities in its new and refurbished buildings. These facilities include full access for the disabled as well as sporting and information communication technology (ICT) facilities for the 21st Century.
- 2 Ysgol Clywedog was founded in September 2003, following a major reorganisation of secondary education in Wrexham. There is no previous inspection report.
- 3 Ysgol Clywedog is an 11 – 16 community comprehensive school situated in the west of Wrexham. Clywedog draws from the villages to the north and west of the town as well as from the town itself. Approximately 50% of pupils travel to school by bus.
- 4 There are currently 1032 pupils on roll. Pupils are drawn from the full range of socio-economic backgrounds although there are distinct areas of disadvantage within the school's catchment area. The full range of ability is represented in the school population. The school has resourced provision for pupils with both specific and moderate learning difficulties. There are an additional 80 pupils on the school's special educational needs register for School Action or School Action Plus. There are 30 pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. There are 50 pupils for whom English is an additional language, and 32 of these have additional support. There are four looked after children on roll.
- 5 Although the school is proud of and seeks to promote our Welsh heritage, English is the predominant language spoken at home. The school's roll includes pupils from fifteen different nationalities, which it seeks to acknowledge as a celebration of cultural diversity.
- 6 Currently 16.4% of pupils are registered as eligible for free school meals.

### **The school's priorities and targets**

- 7 The school operates a broad and balanced curriculum, which follows the requirements of the National Curriculum. This curriculum is underpinned by extension and support activities for all pupils in timetabled and extra-curricular activities. These activities embrace learning, cultural and sporting opportunities and include visits at home and abroad.
- 8 Although the school is still relatively new it has already received a number of nationally recognised awards. These include the Basic Skills Award, the Rolls Royce Science Award, a WSSA Award, CELTEC Achieving Quality Learning Award, the Youth Work in Education Award and Make it Work Challenge Grand Final Award. The school is also in the process of seeking recognition in other areas e.g. geography and the environment.

## Summary

- 9 In accordance with the Education Act 2005, I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that this school is in need of significant improvement.
- 10 The school has, in the past three years been through a difficult period of re-organisation, including changing sites twice and working on through a major building programme. This period had put significant demands on all concerned, particularly those involved in the management of the day-to-day running of the school.

### Table of grades awarded

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

### Standards

#### Grades for standards in subjects inspected

Subject	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
English	3	3
Welsh second language	3	4
Mathematics	3	3
Science	3	3
Design and technology	2	2
Information technology	2	2
History	3	3
Geography	2	2
Modern foreign languages	3	4
Art	2	2
Music	4	4
Physical education	3	2

Religious education	1	2
Drama	2	2
Business and communications systems	-	2
Catering	-	2
Child development	-	3
Electronic products	-	2
Engineering	-	2
Health and social care	-	2
Sociology	-	3

(For an explanation of the grades, please see the beginning of the report)

- 11 Note: Four subjects, law, psychology, hair and beauty and construction are taught as part of an alternative curriculum at a local college. It was not possible to acquire sufficient information to make judgements on the standards achieved by these pupils.
- 12 The standards achieved in the different subjects show considerable variations. Many are good and have no important shortcomings (grade 2) and religious education in key stage 3 has some outstanding features. Standards in three subject areas have important shortcomings (grade 4).

The standards that pupils achieved, at the different stages, were:

190 lessons	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Key stage 3	5%	40%	45%	10%	0%
Key stage 4	3%	47%	40%	10%	0%
Key stages 3 and 4	4%	43%	43%	10%	0%

(For an explanation of the grades, please see the beginning of the report)

- 13 The school is significantly below both the targets for standards in lessons set by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), and below the averages for Wales for 2005/2006.
- 14 The 10% of lessons judged to be grade 4 is an important shortcoming.
- 15 Whilst the overall judgement on standards indicates significant underachievement, almost half of the lessons inspected had no important shortcomings, and occasional lessons in drama, information technology, mathematics and religious education had some outstanding features.
- 16 In 2005, most examination and assessment results fell significantly. In key stage 4, most improved in 2006, to reach or just exceed the 2004 levels. In key stage 3, in 2006, English and science were above the 2004 level, whilst mathematics has declined over the three years.
- 17 Overall, results are below both National and Unitary Authority (UA) levels, and some key indicators, such as the core subject indicator (CSI) are not improving. National targets set for attainment in both key stage 3 and key stage 4 are not met.
- 18 The school's overall performance compares poorly with other, similar schools nationally.

- 19 Several individual subjects achieve good standards and good results, which compare well with other schools.
- 20 Most pupils listen well to their teachers and contribute to class discussions. Some pupils do not always pay attention and some do not contribute positively to class activities. The presentation of written work is usually good and many pupils set out their ideas clearly. A significant number of pupils have errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. A small number fail to complete their work. Most pupils read aloud accurately and fluently. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress.
- 21 In both key stages there is evidence of good standards in number work, especially with more able pupils. A number of pupils lack confidence when applying their numerical skills in everyday situations.
- 22 Almost all pupils have good information technology skills but do not readily use computers to communicate and process information in subjects across the curriculum.
- 23 Pupils' reticence to speak Welsh hinders the development of their bilingual competence at both key stages.
- 24 The majority of pupils work well together in pairs or groups and show respect for each other and their teachers. A minority do not work productively and in some lessons they disturb the learning of their class mates.
- 25 Pupils at the school succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background. Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) are well supported and well integrated into the school.
- 26 The behaviour of most pupils in and around the school is good. There is a minority who do not behave as well as they should, and a significant number of lessons suffer from inattentive and talkative pupils.
- 27 The level of pupils' attendance is around the UA and national level, and compares well with similar schools. Attendance is, however, below the national target.

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

- 28 The following table shows the quality of teaching and assessment in lessons observed during the inspection:

190 lessons	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	5%	42%	43%	10%	0%
KS4	5%	48%	37%	10%	0%
KS3 and KS4	5%	45%	40%	10%	0%

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

- 29 The overall proportion of grade 1 and grade 2 lessons is significantly below the average for Wales reported for 2005/2006. The 10% of lessons given a grade 4 is an important shortcoming.

- 30 In a minority of subjects teaching and assessment is consistently good, and outstanding features were observed in 5% of lessons.
- 31 Where there is good teaching, teachers are enthusiastic, they maintain a lively pace through lessons, use questions effectively and set high expectations for pupils' progress and behaviour.
- 32 There are variations in quality across the curriculum in:
  - the of preparation of lessons;
  - the matching of work accurately to pupils' abilities, and the pace of lessons;
  - the use of marking and assessment to help pupils understand how to improve;
  - the rigour in applying the school's behaviour policies; and
  - the effectiveness and range of teaching strategies used.
- 33 Teachers promote equal opportunities effectively and successfully. Boys frequently achieve better overall results than girls; nationally the reverse is true.
- 34 Parents receive a report on their child's progress every term. The format of the report does not provide detailed information on what the pupil needs to do to improve, and thus does not support the development of target setting in subjects.
- 35 There are inconsistencies in the quality of assessment and marking both between and within subject departments. It is stronger in key stage 4 than in key stage 3. The developing school database is used to allow teachers and tutors track pupils' progress. This tracking is not yet fully effective across the curriculum.
- 36 The curriculum meets statutory requirements except that it does not meet the requirement to provide all pupils with a daily act of collective worship.
- 37 All pupils in key stage 3 follow discrete lessons in drama and ICT, and there are appropriate vocational options available in key stage 4. All pupils have equality of access to all aspects of the curriculum. The pre-vocational courses in key stage 4 lack clear progression opportunities and have limited accreditation opportunities.
- 38 There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which is valued by pupils.
- 39 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has good features which outweigh shortcomings. Spiritual development is planned in some subjects, there are regular meetings of the Christian Club, good quality assemblies and pupils show concern for others by raising considerable amounts of money for good causes. They show respect for other cultures. A small number of pupils do not show courtesy and respect to their peers and teachers.
- 40 Overall, work-related education and careers education and guidance are good. Pupils in key stage 4 undertake work experience and those in key stage 3 get good information linking GCSE choices to potential careers.
- 41 The school promotes sustainability and global citizenship well.
- 42 There are shortcomings in the development of bilingualism, key skills and independent learning.

- 43 Pupils at the school are cared for, guided and supported well. There is a clearly defined pastoral care system, managed by progress managers who know their pupils well.
- 44 There are sound child protection procedures and the school promotes effectively the well being of its pupils.
- 45 The school's provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good with no important shortcomings. The Special Needs Code of Practice is implemented effectively. There are good contacts with parents, primary schools, and the school works closely with external agencies.
- 46 Attainment tutors are used effectively to support learners, and their recording of pupils' progress in lessons is an outstanding feature.
- 47 The school has effective measures to promote equality of opportunity, racial harmony and the acceptance of life in a diverse community. Pupils from ethnic minority groups are well integrated and express their satisfaction with the school.
- 48 The school responds quickly to any unfairness, discrimination or abuse suffered by any pupil. Pupils themselves are confident that any instances of bullying would be dealt with as a matter of urgency.

### **Leadership and management**

- 49 The school has clearly expressed aims and priorities that are widely displayed around the school. The headteacher and her senior colleagues actively seek to promote these in all aspects of the school's work.
- 50 There are variations in the effectiveness of leadership across the school. In some cases leadership and communications are not clear, and in others the application of agreed policies is inconsistent and insufficiently rigorous. A minority of departments are well led and managed and achieve good standards.
- 51 Examination targets for the school are agreed with the UA, and in 2006 the school came close to achieving most of these. Those for the next few years require a greater degree of challenge. The processes of target setting at subject level are inconsistent and do not impact significantly on standards.
- 52 Performance Management and the continuing professional development of teachers is managed effectively.
- 53 Governors are committed to the success of the school, but their role in strategic management is underdeveloped. As the school does not meet the requirements to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils, their statutory responsibilities are not met fully.
- 54 The headteacher and leadership team have a broadly accurate understanding of the strengths and shortcomings of the school. Whilst there is a monitoring and self-evaluation process it is insufficiently systematic, consistent and rigorous to have a significant impact on standards. Practice in subject departments is of variable quality.

- 55 The school improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities but together with those produced by some subject departments, lacks clear success criteria and specific time-scales.
- 56 Nearly all the teachers at the school are well qualified for the subjects they teach. There are a number of subjects where some classes are taught by non-specialists.
- 57 There are adequate resources for learning, including sufficient text books in most subjects, a creative range of materials produced within the school, a reasonable number of computers and a well used library. Some information technology rooms cannot cater for more than half a class which restricts pupils' opportunities to develop their skills.
- 58 The accommodation is good and sufficient for the current size of the school. There are good displays of pupils' work around the school.
- 59 The finances of the school are well managed, but because of the underachievement highlighted earlier in this report, the school does not give full value for money.

## Recommendations

- 60 The school needs to:
- R1 raise standards of achievement and pupils' standards in the key skills across the school;
  - R2 improve the quality of teaching and assessment;
  - R3 develop and implement consistently a systematic and rigorous process for monitoring and evaluation at all levels of management;
  - R4 improve the quality of improvement plans at school and subject level;
  - R5 continue to work to improve attendance;
  - R6 develop approaches to bilingualism across the school;
  - R7 develop further the role of governors in the strategic management of the school; and
  - R8 satisfy the requirements to provide all pupils with a daily act of collective worship.

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 4: Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

- 61 In accordance with the Education Act 2005, I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that this school is in need of significant improvement.
- 62 The grade awarded by the inspection team does not agree with the grade 3 awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report. Our judgement was made because there are important shortcomings in some subject areas, and in overall standards of achievement.

#### Key stage 3 and key stage 4

- 63 The following table shows the standards achieved in the subjects inspected:

Subject	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4
English	3	3
Welsh second language	3	4
Mathematics	3	3
Science	3	3
Design and technology	2	2
Information technology	2	2
History	3	3
Geography	2	2
Modern foreign languages	3	4
Art	2	2
Music	4	4
Physical education	3	2
Religious education	1	2
Drama	2	2
Business and communications systems	-	2
Catering	-	2
Child development	-	3
Electronic products	-	2
Engineering	-	2
Health and social care	-	2
Sociology	-	3

(For an explanation of the grades, please see the beginning of the report)

- 64 Note: Four subjects, law, psychology, hair and beauty and construction are taught as part of an alternative curriculum at a local college. Although some pupils were interviewed and some of their work was scrutinised, it was not possible to acquire sufficient information to make judgements on the standards achieved by these pupils.

- 65 There are wide variations in the standards achieved across the curriculum. Several subjects are good with no important shortcomings in one or both key stages (grade 2). Religious education is good with outstanding features in key stage 3 (grade 1). All three core subjects, and a small number of others, have good features that outweigh shortcomings (grade 3).
- 66 Three subject areas are judged to have important shortcomings, modern foreign languages and Welsh second language in key stage 4, and music in both key stages (grade 4).

- 67 The standards that pupils achieved, at the different stages, were:

190 lessons	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Key stage 3	5%	40%	45%	10%	0%
Key stage 4	3%	47%	40%	10%	0%
Key stages 3 and 4	4%	43%	43%	10%	0%

(For an explanation of the grades, please see the beginning of the report)

- 68 The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) targets for the standards to be achieved in lessons by 2007 are that 65% should be grade 2 or better, and 98% should be grade 3 or better. The school does not attain these targets (47% grade 2 or better, 90% grade 3 or better). It is an important shortcoming that 10% of lessons were judged to be grade 4 (some good features but shortcomings in important areas).
- 69 The overall judgement on standards indicates significant underachievement, which is an important shortcoming. However, almost half of the lessons seen had no important shortcomings, and occasional lessons in drama, information technology, mathematics and religious education had some outstanding features.

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

- 70 On entry to the school, the overall ability of the current Y7 intake, as measured by key stage 2 National Curriculum Assessments, was slightly below the national average. Measured reading ages show a significant number of pupils below the national average.
- 71 There are a number of good features in pupil attainment and progress:
- overall examination results in key stage 4, which had fallen significantly in 2005, recovered in 2006 to equal or slightly exceed the 2004 level;
  - in key stage 3, the fall in results in 2004 was not as significant as in key stage 4. Of the three core subjects, English and science had better results in 2006 than in 2004; and
  - some individual subjects achieve good standards and good results, which compare well with other schools.
- 72 There are some shortcomings in pupil attainment.
- 73 In key stage 3:
- the proportion of pupils gaining level 5 or above in mathematics has declined over the past 3 years;
  - the CSI has not improved over the last three years;
  - all three core subjects are below the UA and Wales averages, and are below the

- national targets set for 2007; and
  - the school's results compare poorly with similar schools nationally. Science is the most successful of the core subjects.
- 74 In key stage 4:
- the proportion of pupils gaining five or more A\*-C grades at GCSE, and the CSI is below UA and national averages, and below the targets set by WAG.
  - the proportion gaining the CSI has declined over the last three years;
  - results in the three core subjects in 2006 were below the levels attained in 2004; and
  - the school's results, at both key stages, compare poorly with similar schools nationally. Many of the main indicators are either in the lowest quartile or below the median.
- 75 Boys frequently achieve better overall results than girls; nationally the reverse is true.
- 76 The school and UA agree targets for the main indicators of test and examination success annually. In 2006, the school was close to its targets at key stage 4. In key stage 3, science exceeded its target, whilst English and mathematics came close to theirs. Targets for the current and following years, indicate modest improvement, but do not reflect sufficiently high expectations.
- 77 Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.
- 78 Pupils usually listen well to their teachers and to each other. About three quarters of the pupils take an active part in class discussions, demonstrating a good knowledge and understanding of their work and technical terms. When given the opportunity, they work well in pairs and small groups. In other lessons however, pupils lack confidence to put forward opinions and they do not extend their responses. In about a fifth of classes, pupils do not listen attentively. They engage in chatting and shout out comments and answers.
- 79 Most pupils read aloud accurately and fluently and some do so expressively. They scan texts for information, use computers for research, read for pleasure and make good use of the school's library. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress. In key stage 4, many pupils are able to read, understand and interpret texts quite well. In key stage 3, pupils are more reliant on their teachers in interpreting what is read.
- 80 Pupils write in a range of forms. Most understand that they must adapt their style to suit their audience and purpose of their piece of work. Presentation of written work is usually good. Many pupils can extend their writing. They set out ideas clearly and supply evidence to support a point of view, but they lack confidence in structuring their work. A significant number of pupils do not draft their work effectively so that errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar are left unchecked. A minority of pupils write carelessly, do little in the time available and have incomplete work in books.
- 81 The numerical skills of pupils, in both key stages, have good features which outweigh shortcomings. There is evidence of good standards especially with the more able

pupils. A number of pupils lack confidence in their numerical abilities when applying and using numerical facts in everyday situations.

- 82 Almost all pupils have good information technology skills but they do not readily use computers to communicate and process information across the curriculum.
- 83 Pupils' reticence to speak Welsh hinders the development of their bilingual competence at both key stages.

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

- 84 In those lessons where standards are good with no important shortcomings, pupils have good recall and understanding of previous work. They use appropriate language and terminology accurately and they answer spoken questions confidently and at length. They use extended writing and sustain their concentration throughout the lesson. Pupils work productively in pairs or groups and use their communication, number and information technology skills effectively. They are capable of using successfully a range of research skills, and demonstrate good practical skills where these are appropriate.
- 85 Where there are shortcomings in standards, pupils are easily distracted from their work, have poor recall of previous work, and are reluctant to answer spoken questions. Some have incomplete work in their books. In language lessons many have difficulty in coping with new problems and situations. The presentation of written work, and the depth of analysis are in need of further development.
- 86 In those subjects where standards are good, pupils have a good understanding of their current level of achievement and understand their own strengths and shortcomings. They frequently know what they have to do in order to improve.
- 87 Whilst many pupils make sufficient progress (and are therefore prepared for the next stage of their learning or training), a significant number do not.
- 88 There are wide variations in the motivation pupils demonstrate across the curriculum. Whilst in some lessons pupils display a positive attitude, there are a significant number of pupils – many of them girls – who are passive in lessons and rarely volunteer answers and who make minimal contributions to class activities.
- 89 The majority of pupils behave well in class and around the school. They show good self-discipline, are respectful and courteous to one another, their teachers and to visitors. They form a harmonious community. There is, however, a minority whose behaviour is immature and disrespectful. They call out in lessons, talk across and over one another. This behaviour affects the continuity of lessons. Occasionally there is poor behaviour in corridors.
- 90 Overall attendance during the previous school year was 91.1%. This is similar to the local authority average (91.3%) and above national averages (90.2%). Attendance is also better than other schools with similar free school meal figures where the average is 90.2%. However, the attendance is below the WAG target of 94%.

- 91 The vast majority of pupils are punctual to school and to lessons during the day. A small number arrive late to school for various reasons, which are checked by school staff, but few are persistently late.
- 92 Over half of all pupils work sensibly and productively in pair and group activities. In a number of subject areas they demonstrate appropriate respect, consideration and support to each other. Similar numbers of pupils persevere well when they carry out investigative tasks to solve familiar and unfamiliar problems. Good examples are seen in lessons in English, catering, design and technology, drama, geography, health and social care and science. In art, design and technology, physical education and personal and social education, pupils show good levels of innovation and creativity in their ideas, decisions and outcomes.
- 93 The majority of pupils show respect for each other and their teachers.
- 94 There are some shortcomings. A minority of pupils are immature in their attitudes and do not act responsibly with others. They are also reluctant to think for themselves and rely heavily of their teachers for ideas. There is a significant number of pupils who are insufficiently interested in their work and do not take the necessary steps independently to improve their own progress. Some fail to show respect to teachers or to each other.
- 95 Pupils at the school succeed regardless of their social, ethnic or linguistic background. Some 50 pupils have English as an additional language. They integrate well into the school, and express the view that they are well supported and happy in the school. Most pupils are aware of equal opportunities issues and show respect for diversity within society.
- 96 Overall, pupils are prepared well for participation in the workplace and community. The school encourages appropriate attitudes and values, provides a fair and sensible range of curricular and extra-curricular activities and, primarily in key stage 4, offers good work-related education.

## The quality of education and training

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

#### Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

- 97 The grade awarded by the inspection team does not agree with the grade 2 awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report. Our judgement was made because there are shortcomings, some of them important, in the quality of some teaching, and because of variations in the quality of assessment.

#### KS3 and KS4

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

- 98 The following table shows the quality of teaching and assessment in lessons observed during the inspection:

190 lessons	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
KS3	5%	42%	43%	10%	0%
KS4	5%	48%	37%	10%	0%
KS3 and KS4	5%	45%	40%	10%	0%

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

- 99 In her Annual Report on schools inspected in 2005/2006, the Chief Inspector reported that the average judgements for the quality of teaching and assessment were 67% of lessons gaining grade 1 or better, and 95% gaining grade 3 or better. The school was awarded 50% grade 2 or better and 90% grade 3 or better. The Chief inspector also reports that across Wales, 17% of the lessons seen were awarded a grade 1, and 5% were awarded a grade 4.
- 100 The 10% of lessons judged to be grade 4 in this inspection represents an important shortcoming. The lessons where there are shortcomings in important areas, were observed across seven separate subjects.
- 101 There are some subject areas where teaching and assessment are consistently good and only rarely have important shortcomings. Nine lessons were observed in which there were outstanding features.
- 102 The level of challenge presented to pupils varies considerably across the curriculum. In the most successful lessons, work is carefully matched to the abilities of all the pupils. In a number of classes, whilst the level of challenge is appropriate to most pupils, expectations for the most able are not high enough. In some lessons teachers do not succeed in engaging the active participation of some pupils (frequently girls). Pupils with additional learning needs are well supported.
- 103 There are good relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils. Showing respect is a school priority which is having a positive effect except in those

instances where pupils talk during lessons at times when they should be listening or working.

- 104 Most teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons appropriately. In a small number of subjects non-specialists are used and these teachers do not have the same depth of subject knowledge and understanding.
- 105 Marking in lessons sometimes lacks detail. Not all teachers use effective question and answer techniques to help their pupils gain full understanding of the subject matter.
- 106 In most lessons teachers share the learning objectives of the lesson with pupils. In some lessons this includes good detail of the expected learning outcomes. Most lessons also include an identification of key skills to be developed during the lesson.
- 107 In the most successful lessons, teachers:
- communicated enthusiastically their subject knowledge at a level that ensured it was understood by all pupils;
  - used a wide and appropriate variety of learning activities;
  - maintained a lively pace throughout the lesson;
  - provided a short plenary at the end of the lesson that consolidated the learning outcomes;
  - used praise effectively;
  - used a range of stimulating resources, including interactive whiteboards, to enhance pupils' understanding; and
  - used marking and assessment positively to further pupils' learning.
- 108 Where teaching had shortcomings or important shortcomings, teachers:
- did not structure the lesson effectively, and so failed to make the best use of the time available;
  - used too limited a range of teaching strategies;
  - used the target language insufficiently in language lessons;
  - talked over pupils' chattering and did not use consistently the school's behaviour management strategies;
  - did not maintain the pace of the lesson; and
  - did not use marking and assessment effectively to help pupils improve.
- 109 Teachers across the school promote equal opportunities effectively and treat all pupils with respect and fairness. Overall, however, girls do not achieve as well as boys.
- 110 The school is very successful in meeting the language needs of those pupils who have English as an additional language. The development of bilingualism (Welsh/English) in line with national policy is less well developed.

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

- 111 The assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' achievements has good features which outweigh shortcomings.

- 112 The leadership team has devised an appropriate whole school policy based on, "Assessment for Learning." Procedures are new and there is on-going development of assessment systems and strategies in all departments. Practice is good in key stage 4 in just over half of the subjects and in key stage 3, practice is good in design and technology. There are however, inconsistencies of practice in day to day assessment of pupils' work particularly in key stage 3.
- 113 In key stage 3, for example, not all teachers:
- explain the assessment criteria to pupils and give them models of successful day-to-day work;
  - write comments on classwork which identify how far pupils have met the criteria and how they might improve; and
  - involve pupils in self and peer assessment so that they fully understand the criteria, their own strengths and areas where they need to improve.
- 114 The school's database is comprehensive and includes results of standardised tests and teachers' assessments at the end of key stage 2. This data is used to predict pupils' end of key stage achievements in all subjects, to identify pupils with additional learning needs and to aid the grouping of pupils.
- 115 All subject teachers are required to summarise the achievements of pupils termly. Subject teachers share the assessment of achievement and effort with their pupils each term. They are also expected to use the data to monitor progress, identify under-performance and counsel individuals. There is inconsistency in the quality of monitoring of individual pupils both between and within departments.
- 116 Progress managers also access the data and compare pupils' current achievements in all subjects with those predicted. There is identification of under achievement and a range of appropriate strategies to support underperforming pupils. They ensure that parents are informed appropriately. Members of the leadership team also mentor an identified group of pupils. In addition, a 'learning coach' (who provides guidance and support) works with specific pupils to discuss progress and to develop their study skills.
- 117 Form tutors receive data and information which enables them to identify under-performance. The role of the form tutor in the early identification of under achievement has yet to achieve a consistent implementation of procedures. Organisation of assessment events and parents' meetings is good. Termly reports for parents of each pupil give grades for effort and achievement for each subject with a space for each pupil to add a target for improvement. The negotiation of the target is carried out with form tutors. The single sheet report, however, does not allow space for subject teachers to include subject specific targets for improvement. As a result, pupils' target setting on reports are not subject specific, with parents insufficiently informed how improvements may be made in each subject. This style of report does not support the development of subject target setting.
- 118 Subject leaders analyse results of external examinations with members of the leadership team, using this information to agree performance targets. In addition, they ensure accurate and fair assessments by monitoring books and arranging meetings for the moderation of assessed work. The requirements of examination boards, the National Curriculum and Code of Practice are met.

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

<b>Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
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119 The grade awarded by the inspection team does not agree with the grade 2 awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report. Our judgement was made because the school does not provide an act of collective worship in all tutor groups, and because there are shortcomings in a number of areas of this key question.

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

120 The curriculum:

- generally meets pupils' learning needs and reflects the aims set out for pupils of statutory age in the Education Act 1996;
- offers opportunities in nearly all curriculum areas to obtain appropriate qualifications;
- provides personal, social and health education, work-related education and careers education and guidance in accordance with WAG guidelines; and
- gives equality of opportunity and access to most pupils to an appropriate learning programme.

121 The school does not provide a daily act of collective worship in all tutor groups. This is a statutory requirement, therefore this an important shortcoming.

122 There are some good features in the curricular provision which include:

- all pupils in key stage 3 having opportunities to develop ICT and drama skills in discrete lessons;
- pupils in key stage 4 having opportunities to study vocational options in health and social care and business and communication systems; and
- access for a small number of pupils to an extended programme of study in partnership with a local college, in law, psychology, construction and hair and beauty.

123 However, there are shortcomings in the educational experiences offered to the pre-vocational groups and some of the key skill classes in key stage 4.

124 In most of the pre-vocational groups there is no learning pathway planned, there are no schemes of work prepared, and opportunities for accreditation are limited. In some of the key skill classes, part of the curriculum time is not taught by a qualified teacher, as the class is supervised by a Learning Support Assistant (LSA).

125 The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The delivery of key skills in lessons is planned in depth in most schemes of work. However, the school does not have a clear strategy to ensure that the key and wider key skills are regularly and consistently used to raise pupils' standards across the curriculum.

- 126 There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which is valued by pupils and reasonably well supported. There are many sporting and musical activities available, after-school clubs and a Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. Pupils also have opportunities to visit theatres, art galleries and local field visits in the humanities subjects.
- 127 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has good features which outweigh shortcomings. The good features include:
- planned spiritual development in many subjects across the curriculum;
  - regular meetings of the school's Christian Club and established links with local churches;
  - year assemblies which give pupils opportunities to develop an understanding of religious beliefs and values;
  - the valuable support Y10 pupils provide for younger pupils through listening to them reading;
  - the respect a large majority of pupils show to their teachers and peers;
  - the concern pupils show for others by raising considerable amounts of money for good causes; and
  - an awareness of other cultures and a respect for diversity.
- 128 Shortcomings include:
- the lack of consistency and opportunities for pupils to be involved in an act of collective worship in tutor periods;
  - the infrequent opportunities in some subjects for pupils to participate in group-work and for sharing their responses; and
  - a small minority of pupils who do not show courtesy and consideration in their social interaction with their peers, and in their behaviour in a small number of classes.
- 129 Overall, pupils' learning is enhanced by the partnerships with parents, community and other education providers, although some aspects warrant further development. The good features are:
- the quality of information to parents contained in the prospectus, options brochure, newsletters and Governors' report;
  - the canvassing of parents' and pupils' opinions on school processes;
  - the range of links raising community awareness of the school and, in particular, supporting work-related activities in key stage 4; and
  - partnership with several initial teacher training institutes that provide student teachers to a wide range of departments, thereby providing pupils with new perspectives, experiences and personalities.
- 130 The shortcomings include:
- the academic reports on pupils which often have insufficient commentary on ability and, particularly, what pupils need to do to improve achievement;
  - curricular bridging links with primary schools which are limited to a minority of subjects; and
  - the underdeveloped use of community links to support learning in key stage 3.

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

- 131 Overall, work-related education is good but it is less well-developed in key stage 3 than in key stage 4.
- 132 In key stage 4, pupils benefit from a well-organised work placement that is supplemented and reinforced by a wide range of work-related activities and events. There are good opportunities to meet employers and to practise their own entrepreneurial and enterprise skills. In key stage 3, whilst pupils receive good information linking GCSE option choices to potential careers, they have very few opportunities to explore these wider business skills.
- 133 Time allocated to the statutory Welsh course at key stage 4 is barely adequate, thus making the development of bilingual skills difficult for a large proportion of pupils. Extra-curricular activities are arranged by the Welsh department to help pupils develop bilingual skills such as the eisteddfod, visits and residential courses. The school has identified opportunities for pupils to see and hear Welsh outside lessons. The physical education department in particular has effective bilingual displays and makes appropriate use of Welsh in some lessons. However, the use of incidental Welsh in lessons, tutorial periods and around the school is rare.
- 134 An audit identifies that Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig is present in schemes of work across the curriculum. It is more effectively embedded in some subjects than others, English and religious education being notable examples.
- 135 There are some good features in the promotion of pupils' awareness of sustainable development and global citizenship. These include:
- good coverage in schemes of work in a number of subjects;
  - pupils' involvement in a number of recycling projects;
  - good links with the National Trust; and
  - an enthusiastic Eco-committee which is working towards greater awareness across the school and an eco-award.
- 136 A good, supportive partnership with Careers Wales helps the school maintain a sound awareness of the needs of employers. However, the involvement of governors in the development of wider and stronger local links is underdeveloped.
- 137 Overall, the school has only partly planned a curriculum that reflects national priorities for all its pupils. There are shortcomings in the opportunities available to develop key skills, bilingualism and independent learning. There are also shortcomings in mapping a clear learning pathway for lifelong learning.

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

<b>Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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- 138 The grade awarded by the inspection team agrees with the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report.

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

139 Good features in the quality of care, support and guidance include:

- a clearly defined pastoral care system managed by enthusiastic progress managers who know the pupils well;
- good relationships between the school, parents and the community;
- good arrangements for mentoring Y11 pupils' progress;
- a good and coherent discipline system, in which expectations are made clear, and parents and governors are fully involved;
- creating an ethos that enables pupils with emotional and behavioural needs to come to better terms with their difficulty;
- good pastoral links with feeder primary schools;
- provide good advice, through careers and personal education, when pupils are making choices for their next stage in learning;
- careful monitoring of attendance, in conjunction with outside agencies;
- a well attended homework club in a local primary school to support pupils unable to stay after school;
- good support for Y7 pupils from key stage 4 pupils when they first transfer to the school;
- good contribution of the School Council to the life of the school;
- good liaison with Health and Social Services that helps provide appropriate care plans for looked after pupils;
- sound child protection procedures, including a designated senior teacher, of which all staff are aware; and
- well documented procedures to promote pupils' well-being.

140 Shortcomings include:

- tutor-time is not always used well;
- curriculum links with the primary school are limited to a minority of subject areas; and
- some pupils have poor attendance.

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

141 The quality of provision for additional learning needs has a good number of good features which include:

- good management and effective implementation of the Special Needs Code of Practice;
- meeting the needs of a wide range of pupils with additional educational or emotional difficulties and good identification of pupils who require extra help;
- good links with parents and feeder primary schools;
- effective use made of attainment tutors across a wide range of tasks to ensure all pupils have access to learning opportunities;
- individual education and behavioural plans, that reflect well the needs of the pupils and provide teachers with good strategies and guidance to plan their lessons;
- annual reviews that are thorough, with good involvement of parents and pupils;
- a good range of strategies that are used effectively to improve pupils' literacy skills;

- whole school strategies to improve behaviour and to stop individual pupils disrupting the learning of others; and
- working closely with the relevant outside agencies.

142 Attainment tutors record the progress pupils with special educational needs make. This is an outstanding feature.

143 However, there are shortcomings. Not all subject teachers make the best use of the information provided for them by the special educational needs department, and not all use the behaviour strategies consistently.

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

144 The good features in the quality of provision for equal opportunities include:

- effective measures that provide racial harmony and willing acceptance of life in a diverse community;
- pupils from ethnic minority groups are happy and well-integrated;
- pupils do not have any serious concerns about bullying and are confident that teachers will deal with any incidents quickly and effectively;
- successful strategies to support pupils if they experience difficulty in school, at home or in the community;
- all subject options at key stage 4 are open to boys and girls, and the school attempts to challenge stereotyping when advising pupils on their options;
- the school provides good support and guidance for pupils who are in the care of the local authority and relevant pastoral plans are active;
- staff respond quickly to any unfairness, discrimination or abuse suffered by pupils; and
- the buildings have been adapted well to accommodate pupils with restricted mobility.

145 However, there is a shortcoming in that the school does not have effective strategies in place to improve the performance and aspirations of some pupils, particularly underachieving girls.

## Leadership and management

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

#### Grade : 3      Good features outweigh shortcomings

146 The grade awarded by the inspection team agrees with the grade awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report.

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

147 The school has, in the past three years been through a difficult period of re-organisation, including changing sites twice and working on through a significant building programme. This period put significant demands on all concerned, particularly those involved in the management of the day to day running of the school.

148 The school has clearly expressed aims and priorities that are widely displayed around the school. The headteacher and her leadership team actively seek to promote these aims and priorities in all aspects of the school's work. Leadership at all levels does not always give clear direction and guidance. Communications between the various levels of management are not always fully effective.

149 A minority of subject areas are led well and provide a good quality of education for their pupils.

150 Whilst almost all the policies and documents required are in place, several have yet to have either a positive or significant impact on standards. Not all policies and associated procedures are applied consistently by all teachers.

151 The school takes account of national priorities but some, such as the development of bilingualism, and the development of the 14–19 curriculum are currently underemphasised.

152 There are good policies for the promotion of equal opportunities, racial awareness and diversity. All pupils are well integrated into the school, and pupils with English as an additional language are well supported.

153 There are effective working relationships with a number of other schools, the local college, support agencies, the Careers Service, and with the local community.

154 The quality and rigour of target setting vary across the school. At whole school level, assessments and standardised data are used to agree overall targets with the UA. For 2006, these targets were reasonably accurate. There is good practice at subject level but in some subjects further development is needed. Target setting for individual pupils is inconsistent. In some subjects, pupils are fully aware of their current level of performance and know what they need to do to reach an agreed

target. In others there is little development. Target setting at all levels is relatively new and has not, to date, had a significant impact on improving standards of achievement.

- 155 There are arrangements in place, including Performance Management, to monitor the quality of work in subject areas and classrooms. At school level the role of the leadership team in monitoring the quality of education provided, is insufficiently detailed and structured, and at subject level there are significant variations in rigour and consistency.
- 156 The continuing professional development of teachers is effectively managed. Training needs are identified through Performance Management, and by learning managers. Additional funding is also obtained from bids for General Teaching Council for Wales bursaries. Teachers are asked to evaluate the quality of courses they attend, but there is no system which attempts to measure the impact of training courses on raising classroom standards.

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

- 157 Governors do not have a clear understanding of their role in school management. There is an appropriate range of committees. However, with some exceptions, there is insufficient knowledgeable enquiry into performance in many areas. Governors have not used fully the training opportunities and link procedures available to them to seek information for themselves. About one third of governors visit the school on a regular basis.
- 158 Governors regularly receive a report from the headteacher, and presentations by representatives from subject departments are frequently made to meetings. Whilst these provide a useful overview of the school, they seldom contain specific data that can be analysed against set targets or against pre-determined time frames for implementation or achievement.
- 159 The governing body does not meet all of its statutory responsibilities. Because of the often insufficiently detailed information they work with, governors are neither able to provide a clear sense of direction for the school, nor to act rigorously as critical friends. They have ensured that all statutory documentation is provided and up-to-date but have not secured a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.

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

<b>Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
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- 160 The grade awarded by the inspection team does not agree with the grade 2 awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report. Our judgement was made because of the variation in the quality of self-evaluation across the school, and improvement plans lack appropriate success criteria and time-scales.

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

- 161 The leadership team has a broadly accurate understanding of the main strengths and shortcomings of the school. Self-evaluation, however, lacks sufficient detail and rigour. There is good practice in around a third of subjects. In the remainder, specific strengths and shortcomings are not clearly identified.
- 162 There is a significant amount of classroom observation. All teachers are observed once as part of Performance Management and may also be seen by a member of the leadership team, their subject leader or one of their colleagues. Much of this observation may be relatively informal or only for parts of a lesson. Whilst this is claimed to have had some beneficial effects, its positive impact on standards of achievement is not high.
- 163 There is no systematic and structured policy to ensure that expectations are consistently and rigorously applied across the school.
- 164 Monitoring of the quality of the delivery of school policies lacks rigour and attention to detail. There are significant inconsistencies across the school in the quality of standards achieved by pupils, teaching and assessment, classroom management and the effectiveness of tutor periods.
- 165 Members of the extended leadership team are attached to subjects in a 'link' role. This requires them to both monitor progress in that subject area and provide support to the subject leader. In some areas this work has had a positive effect, but in practice there are inconsistencies in its overall effectiveness. Individual governors are been linked to subject departments, but, as yet, this is not implemented consistently.
- 166 Examination and test data is analysed by subject leaders and then shared with the leadership team and the governors' curriculum committee. A wide range of standardised data is also used. As yet this work has had only a limited impact on pupils' standards of achievement.
- 167 All teachers are expected to participate in quite extensive consultation over addressing the school's priorities. Pupils are consulted through their School Council and through occasional surveys.

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

- 168 The information gathered by the leadership team through their link role is collated and used to identify the priority areas for improvement. The current School Improvement Plan (2005 -2008) identifies appropriate areas for improvement, but does not identify any specific time-scales or detailed criteria for their successful achievement. Many subject improvement plans share these weaknesses, and only five are without significant shortcomings. Monitoring and evaluation of progress therefore lack clear targets, deadlines and objectives against which to measure progress.
- 169 Within budget constraints, the school provides resources to support important developments at school and subject level. Subject areas can bid for additional funds for specific priorities.

170 This being a new school, it is not possible to report on the progress made since the previous inspection.

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

<b>Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
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171 The grade awarded by the inspection team does not agree with the grade 2 awarded by the school in its self-evaluation report. Our judgement was made because there are shortcomings in staffing provision and in the achievement of full value for money.

172 The staffing of the school has good features that outweigh shortcomings. Overall, the number of staff is just sufficient for the school to run efficiently. The experience profile indicates that 30% of the teaching staff have ten years' experience or less and includes three newly qualified teachers. The good features can be summarised as:

- nearly all teaching staff being appropriately qualified in the subjects they teach;
- the administrative staff ensuring that the office, reception and reprographics areas run efficiently;
- the site manager and his assistant contribute effectively to the maintenance and daily routines of the school;
- technician support in science, information technology, design and technology and art is good;
- the 20 attainment tutors provide good help and encouragement to the pupils with learning and behavioural problems. They work well with teachers ; and
- a well organised and managed library.

173 The main shortcoming in staffing is the extent of the teaching by non-specialists in English, French, mathematics, music, science and Welsh. This can limit the learning experiences and achievements of some pupils.

174 The quality and quantity of learning resources are adequate with good features outweighing shortcomings. The good features include:

- a wide range of text books and equipment across subject areas;
- a creative range of subject materials produced in-house ;
- the provision of equipment for the teaching of discrete ICT lessons;
- a varying range of computers in numerous subject bases throughout the school;
- the use of interactive white boards and digital projectors to enhance classroom teaching;
- the use of out of school resources to enrich the curriculum. These include visits to museums, art galleries, theatres, other countries and field trips ; and
- a range of visiting speakers who enhance pupils' learning experiences.

175 The library is well used by pupils and subjects across the curriculum. It has a range of reference and fiction books but the stock is below recommended levels. However, good use is made of the schools' library service. The effective induction programme encourages pupils' reading. Pupils use the bank of 16 computers for Internet research and for independent work and learning.

- 176 The shortcomings in resources include:
- pupils sharing textbooks in a small number of subjects;
  - the low number of interactive white boards and digital projectors;
  - limited access to ICT rooms for some subjects across the curriculum;
  - lack of space for sufficient computers in music to support composition in preparation for the GCSE examination; and
  - the problems in whole classes using some of the banks of computers in subject bases across the school. These computers are located in rooms that cannot cater for more than half a class, thereby restricting pupils' opportunities and development.
- 177 The accommodation has good features and no important shortcomings and is sufficient for the number of pupils currently on roll. It meets the pastoral and academic needs of the curriculum and has the following good features:
- the school has a fresh, tidy appearance;
  - most rooms cater well for all class sizes;
  - all subject rooms are grouped together;
  - the good quality of the music rooms, the special educational needs area and the games and physical education facilities;
  - the school grounds and buildings are kept clean, very well maintained and litter free; and
  - in classrooms and corridors throughout the school, the displays are bright and colourful and provide an effective and stimulating learning environment, which is an outstanding feature.
- 178 In parts of the school during the refurbishment, inappropriate materials and equipment were used. As a result, necessary corrective maintenance has already been carried out by the school.
- 179 Overall, the deployment, management and development of staff have good features that outweigh shortcomings. Included in the good features are:
- the deployment of most staff making good and effective use of their time, expertise and experience;
  - the effective work of the attainment tutors;
  - the training and professional development of staff being co-ordinated and related to the school improvement plan, Performance Management, and the needs of departments and individuals; and
  - the programmes and support for initial teacher training students being detailed and in line with college and university requirements.
- 180 There is, however, no formal programme of tutorials with appropriate school managers to contribute to the overall professional development of newly qualified teachers.
- 181 The school has implemented its strategy for the workload agreement. It has made provision in the time-table for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment (PPA).
- 182 The headteacher has consulted all interested bodies and, with the leadership team, has finalised the school's structure for the new teaching and learning responsibilities, which will be implemented within the agreed time scale.

- 183 The financial management of the school is good. The headteacher, the business manager, and the governing body's committee for finance manage the available budget effectively.
- 184 The following good features are evident:
- the finance committee meet regularly and receives up-to-date reports from the headteacher;
  - financial decisions are well focused on the curriculum needs and the educational priorities identified in the school development plan;
  - the school pursues all available grants and sponsorships;
  - within the limited funds, the distribution of capitation to subject areas is effective with opportunities for subject areas to bid for extra funds to introduce initiatives; and
  - the minor recommendations of the last audit report have been addressed.
- 185 The business manager provides good day to day management of the school's finances. The headteacher and learning managers are provided with immediate breakdowns and current balances. School spending is monitored effectively.
- 186 The school uses its resources and finances competently. However, due to the reported shortcomings, especially in pupils' standards of achievement and the quality of the teaching, it only provides limited value for money.

## Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

### English

**Key Stage 3: Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key Stage 4: Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

#### Good features

##### Key Stage 3

187 Most pupils listen carefully to the teacher and to one another. In class discussions, they recall previous learning and demonstrate good knowledge and understanding in relation to abilities. Able pupils pose questions, justify opinions and refer to evidence to support their ideas. When given the opportunity, they collaborate well in pairs and small groups and support each other in their learning.

188 Pupils read an appropriate range of fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama, including texts which reflect the culture of Wales. Nearly all read aloud with accuracy and fluency. All read for pleasure. Pupils with additional learning needs are well supported in the development of reading. Progress is made, particularly by those involved in the "Catch up" programme. Pupils, with few exceptions, effectively skim and scan computers and texts for information. They are slowly developing confidence in understanding inference, the effects of devices used by authors and subject vocabulary.

189 Pupils write in a range of forms and for a variety of purposes. In portfolios of best written work, over half adapt tone and language to audience. These pupils demonstrate that they can improve writing by planning and drafting. Presentation skills are often good. Able pupils structure their writing well and can organise persuasive arguments and create mood in narrative writing.

##### Key Stage 4

190 Pupils usually listen respectfully to teachers and to one another. Those with additional learning needs listen attentively to stories read by the teacher and to videos. When asked, pupils are able to explain their work and engage willingly in class discussions. When given the opportunity, they collaborate well in pairs and small groups. For example, they support one another when they interpret the language and style of challenging pre-20th century poetry.

191 Pupils read aloud fluently and with very few exceptions, they read with accuracy. All read an appropriate range of challenging texts and retrieve information from the Internet and books. They have a clear understanding of plots, characters and themes. There is good recall of what is read and pupils pose questions to clarify their understanding. Most are developing confidence in identifying devices used by authors.

192 Pupils demonstrate an understanding of the criteria required for different kinds of writing. For example, they recognise the conventions of crime genre. Over two-thirds demonstrate an awareness of audience and purpose and can extend their writing

when required. Coursework reflects an appropriate range of styles. It includes use of terminology and references to support opinion. Able pupils write with a growing confidence. Their critical writing is usually well organised and they competently compare texts. Pupils with additional learning needs extend writing when supported and produce good work in relation to abilities, particularly when writing about their own experiences.

## **Shortcomings**

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

- 193 In written work, around half of the pupils lack understanding of the differences between spoken and written language.
- 194 Drafting does not always eliminate errors of punctuation, spelling and grammar.
- 195 Pupils of middle and lower abilities:
- are reliant on their teachers and lack confidence when interpreting texts;
  - lack confidence in speaking and when collaborating in pairs and small groups;
  - demonstrate weakness in structuring sentences and paragraphs; and
  - do not always extend their writing and in some cases, work is left unfinished.

## **Welsh second language**

**Key Stage 3: Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key Stage 4: Grade 4:** Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

### **Good features**

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

- 196 Pupils have good listening skills. In most of the classes they listen respectfully to their teachers and to each other. They extract information well from tape, to record the information promptly. They respond accurately to questions on the language introduced in the lesson.
- 197 Pupils collaborate well in pairs. They share ideas to create simple dialogue on a familiar topic. They show a sound grasp of the past tense.
- 198 Using a range of sentence patterns pupils develop their writing skills to produce factual passages. The highest achievers in key stage 4 write extended documents for a range of purposes to a good degree of accuracy. Pupils at both key stages structure their extended documents well. When Y8 pupils write simple sentences to extend their use of adjectives they read their work to the class. Boys show more flair than girls.
- 199 Pupils use ICT regularly to complete comprehension exercises and to present display documents effectively.
- 200 Pupils with additional educational needs make equal progress when resources are tailored to their needs.

## Shortcomings

### Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

- 201 With few exceptions, pupils are hesitant speakers. Their responses in formal exercises are brief and lack fluency. They lack confidence to speak independently without a worksheet or script.
- 202 Pupils use only the language structures and vocabulary currently being introduced. They do not attempt to vary or extend their responses as they are unable to adapt the patterns they have learned to new situations.
- 203 Pupils are hesitant readers. They are often unsure of their pronunciation of familiar words. They do not read expressively.
- 204 In about one-third of lessons, pupils are not sufficiently on task to improve their standards.

### Key Stage 4

- 205 In about one-third of full course GCSE lessons pupils do not make progress. They are unable to hold a short general conversation in Welsh. They show only partial understanding of the familiar language used and make limited oral and written responses.

## Mathematics

- Key Stage 3: Grade 3** Good features outweigh shortcomings  
**Key Stage 4: Grade 3** Good features outweigh shortcomings

### Good features

#### Key Stage 3

- 206 Most pupils' mental numerical skills have improved as a result of the lesson starter activities.
- 207 Pupils in Y7 and Y8 are developing a sound understanding of the basic angle properties of straight lines, intersecting lines and regular polygons.
- 208 Y9 pupils are beginning to understand the concept of distance-time graphs and can draw the appropriate graphs and read information from them.
- 209 In Y8 and Y9, pupils' skills in investigational work are being developed with data handling projects.

#### Key Stage 4

- 210 In 2006, a majority of more able pupils in Y11 achieved the higher grade passes at GCSE.
- 211 In the same year, a class of more able pupils in Y10 achieved C grade passes at GCSE in Statistics.

- 212 Lower ability pupils in Y11 understand the concept of three figure bearings and can apply this knowledge to examples in everyday life.
- 213 The more able pupils in Y10 understand the concepts of rational and irrational numbers and can manipulate and simplify surds.
- 214 Lower ability pupils in Y10 are able to solve accurately linear equations which contain brackets and fractions.

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

- 215 Most of the more able pupils across the age range answer questions orally with clarity, understanding and accuracy.
- 216 Nearly all pupils are developing a sound knowledge of number, vulgar fractions, decimal fractions and percentages and the relationship between them.
- 217 They have spatial awareness and understand the concepts of the area and volume using appropriate units.
- 218 Most pupils with special educational needs have good support and make progress.

#### **Shortcomings**

##### **Key Stage 3**

- 219 Although in National Curriculum Assessments the proportion of pupils gaining at least a level 5 has been consistent over the last three years, it is still below the national averages.

##### **Key Stage 4**

- 220 In the GCSE examination, the lower middle ability pupils in Y11 underachieved as a result of their inadequate coursework.

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

- 221 In some classes across the ability ranges, the more able pupils are not always challenged in lessons and this has an adverse effect on achievement.
- 222 A minority of lower ability pupils do not always complete and present their work in a neat, logical way. They do not always correct work that is wrong.
- 223 They lack confidence in their mathematical abilities and are too dependent on teacher support.
- 224 A small number of lower ability pupils have difficulty recalling mathematical concepts and knowledge from previous lessons.
- 225 Pupils' mathematical skills are not always enhanced by the individual use of ICT.

<b>Science</b>
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**Key Stage 3: Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key Stage 4: Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Good features**

**Key Stage 3**

- 226 A small majority of pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of a range of topics covered in the programme of study.
- 227 Higher attaining and a minority of average ability pupils have a secure recall of key concepts and can apply them to a range of scientific problems both in familiar and unfamiliar situations.
- 228 A small majority of pupils use scientific terms accurately in responses to questions and in reporting on practical activities.
- 229 Generally, pupils develop good practical skills, work safely and collaborate well in most situations.
- 230 A small majority of pupils possess a good understanding of some of the scientific principles in areas such as healthy living and how human activity affects our environment.
- 231 A minority of pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

**Key Stage 4**

- 232 Higher attaining pupils and a minority of pupils of average ability have a sound understanding of the more complex concepts that they study.
- 233 Higher attaining pupils can use their understanding to explain complex problems in areas they are familiar with and in some new areas.
- 234 A small majority of pupils show good understanding of the way scientific developments have contributed to the development of industry, the economy and sustainable development.
- 235 A minority of pupils complete investigational work to a good standard. They apply their scientific knowledge and understanding well in the planning stage, include preliminary work, and make systematic observations and measurements.
- 236 These pupils also analyse their results using appropriate graphs or formulae, assess the validity of their findings, and evaluate how errors occur in experimental work and how they can be reduced.

## Shortcomings

### Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

- 237 A significant number of average and lower ability pupils have a less secure recall and understanding of current and previous work.
- 238 These pupils have difficulties on occasions applying some scientific principles to tasks and outcomes from practical work.
- 239 The progress of some classes is hindered by pupils' undisciplined talking.

### Key Stage 3

- 240 Although pupils have some opportunities to develop the skills of investigation, these are not fully developed in many topics across the programme of study.

### Key Stage 4

- 241 In reporting their investigative work, many pupils fail to address the skill areas of planning, analysing and evaluating in sufficient depth to access the higher marks.

## Design and technology

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

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

### Good features

#### Key Stage 3

- 242 Almost all pupils plan well for the making stage of their work and have a good understanding of making processes across a broad range of materials.
- 243 In all the design and technology areas, over two-thirds of pupils produce well crafted and finished products. They also show a good understanding of the materials used.
- 244 Most pupils develop good skills in using CAD software from an early stage in the school. Their design outcomes using basic computer aided manufacturing equipment are good.
- 245 In food technology, evaluation skills are developed well via star-diagrams and sensory considerations.
- 246 Lower ability pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve to their potential.

#### Key Stage 4

- 247 Nearly all pupils make good use of a design process to guide their project work.

- 248 In the best GCSE coursework files, presentation skills are good with good graphical communications skills. Most pupils use design software well to enhance their presentations.
- 249 In graphic products, almost all pupils use the Internet well to find information to fashion their ideas for a point of sale holder. In project files, graphical communication skills are often innovative and imaginative.
- 250 In textiles, pupils experiment with a range of creative processes and at least two-thirds display a good knowledge and understanding of fibres, fabrics and technical processes.
- 251 In all material areas, pupils use the computer well to research their projects and to collect the relevant material that helps them make their design decisions.
- 252 All pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials, processes and techniques is well developed across all design areas.
- 253 In resistant materials, pupils' skills in the use of traditional processes and equipment are good. The most able have very good practical skills. For example, nearly all pupils combine materials such as wood, plastic, electrical and electronic components well in their light unit project.
- 254 Lower ability pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve to their potential.

### **Shortcomings**

#### **Key Stage 3**

- 255 Around half of pupils do not fully understand and implement the design process. Too many of them are not creative enough and produce product outcomes that are very similar to those of their peers.

#### **Key Stage 4**

- 256 About two-thirds of pupils do not include quick developmental design drawing in their design folios, and the graphical communication skills of about a third of pupils is the weaker element of their work.

<b>Information technology</b>
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**Key stage 3: Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings

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

### **Good features**

#### **Key Stage 3**

- 257 Nearly all pupils show good practical computing skills. They manage a computer well showing good skills in logging on to the network, using the desktop and locating

programmes. They can handle icons, menus and functions well when retrieving and saving their work.

- 258 In one Y7 group all pupils very quickly mastered the skills of setting up a basic presentation using "PowerPoint". They produced five very informative, well crafted slides depicting the story of St. David. They used text boxes, fonts, and coloured backgrounds, together with clipart to good effect in their work.
- 259 In a Y9 lesson over two-thirds of the group built effectively on their prior knowledge of presentation software and quickly produced a brief presentation. They produced interesting and varied outcomes. About a fifth of the group, notably the more able pupils, carefully considered the clarity of their messages and changed and adapted fonts, images and background colours to achieve the desired impact on their readers.
- 260 Most of the pupils show good skills in using search tools to find information on the Internet. They select and use the information obtained well in their communications tasks.
- 261 Less able pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress, manage a computer well and achieve to their potential.

#### **Key Stage 4**

- 262 All pupils have good practical computing skills and can confidently use computers and peripheral equipment well to carry out tasks.
- 263 All pupils can choose the appropriate software required for the task and can use it effectively and efficiently to complete the required work.
- 264 The most able pupils have a good understanding of the theoretical aspects of their tasks and are able to explain and discuss their work using an appropriate level of technical vocabulary.
- 265 Some two-thirds of pupils have a good understanding of business correspondence and can create effective and efficient documentation to run a small business. They can word process relevant business documents with confidence and show good skills in setting up a mail merge process, using data from a previously prepared database.
- 266 Most pupils show good skills in using search tools to research topics on the Internet. They select information discerningly and include it to good effect in their work being sufficiently aware of the impact on their target audience.

#### **Shortcomings**

##### **Key Stage 3**

- 267 Around half of the pupils lack confidence and competence in using the higher order facilities of some software. Although pupils in general can create a basic database they have insufficient depth of knowledge and understanding of queries.

##### **Key Stage 4**

- 268 A small number of pupils are over-reliant on their teachers when asked to carry out new tasks. These pupils lack the confidence and competence skills expected for their

age and capabilities. Also, rarely did any pupil use any form of shortcut feature to speed up basic processes.

## History

**Key Stage 3: Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key Stage 4: Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

### Good features

#### Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

269 Pupils have secure levels of knowledge and understanding. They recall their previous learning appropriately and use subject specific vocabulary accurately.

270 Most pupils have a secure understanding of chronology and can apply their knowledge and understanding to sources of evidence when they consider historical problems.

271 Pupils use appropriate investigative approaches, in line with their abilities, when they work on historical problems. They ask appropriate questions of primary and secondary sources of evidence, and can extract relevant information from a range of sources and texts.

272 The majority of pupils succeed in testing the sources of evidence for reliability, usefulness and bias. They make progress in evaluating the sources and use them appropriately in developing balanced arguments.

273 Above average and most average ability pupils can successfully compare and contrast differing interpretations of historical developments, so that they can provide good reasons to explain the process of change over time.

#### Key Stage 3

274 By Y9, the majority of pupils can distinguish between long-term and short-term causes of change over time.

275 Most pupils are successful in developing their skills in the selection, organisation and communication of information in oral and written tasks.

276 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in acquiring the historical skills, in line with their abilities.

#### Key Stage 4

277 The majority of pupils build upon the historical and key skills which they have developed in key stage 3. Overall, most pupils approach demands to solve historical problems with increased maturity and greater depth of response.

278 Pupils can provide appropriate explanations for the attitudes and motivation of people in the past by asking more searching questions of the sources of evidence.

- 279 The written work of the majority of pupils is organised and presented appropriately. These pupils show progression in their extended writing skills by the end of key stage 4. Some develop their research and independent writing skills which improves the quality of their writing in their coursework.
- 280 Pupils have an appropriate knowledge of the history and culture of Wales. They use their background knowledge of the history of the locality to extend their understanding.

### **Shortcomings**

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

- 281 Around a third of pupils produce indifferently presented written work. Their standards of spelling, punctuation and use of language are underdeveloped.
- 282 There are variations in the standards of written work of a significant minority of pupils. They do not complete their written tasks regularly; this has an impact upon their progress in developing their extended writing skills and in their ability to record their learning for future reference.
- 283 A lack of confidence in presenting an extended oral response to questioning in lessons hinders the progress of a significant minority of pupils.
- 284 Many pupils do not include sufficient detail in their written responses to tasks and challenges which would fully explain their thinking. They do not produce work with the necessary degree of depth, analysis and evaluation to enable them to explain fully the historical significance of the points which they seek to make.

### **Geography**

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

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

#### **Good features**

##### **Key Stage 3**

- 285 Pupils make good progress relative to their ability.
- 286 Pupils have a secure knowledge of the location and characteristics of the continents of the world.
- 287 Y7 pupils know and understand the stages of river development along the course of the River Dee.
- 288 In Y7, pupils produce good quality work on river processes as a result of a fieldwork visit to the River Clywedog.
- 289 Pupils with additional needs in Y8 recognise the differences between weather and climate. They understand that climate changes in relation to a country's latitude.

290 Y8 pupils understand the relationship between the people and environment of the Amazon rainforest.

291 Pupils in Y9 show a good knowledge and understanding of the sustainability and global issues associated with tourism in Gambia.

#### **Key Stage 4**

292 Pupils effectively use investigative skills to research and evaluate the impact of different forms of tourism on locations around the world.

293 Pupils show an increasing understanding of patterns and processes in human geography. They explain the reasons and impact of migration in less economically developed countries.

294 Pupils in Y10 show a good knowledge and understanding of the environmental and economic consequences of using different sources of energy.

295 Pupils use geographical terminology with increasing precision. They use a range of geographical skills and techniques to complete class and coursework assignments successfully.

296 Y11 pupils possess a good knowledge and understanding of processes and patterns in physical geography. A fieldwork study of long shore drift at Borth reinforces pupils' knowledge and understanding of coastal features.

#### **Shortcomings**

##### **Key Stage 3**

297 A few pupils do not stay on task and complete only a limited amount of work.

298 A small number of pupils show a limited understanding of the relationship between the relief of Italy and human settlement.

##### **Key Stage 4**

299 The quality of the written work of a few pupils is not of an appropriate standard relative to their ability.

<b>Modern foreign languages (French)</b>
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**Key Stage 3: Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

**Key Stage 4: Grade 4:** Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

#### **Good features**

##### **Key Stage 3**

300 About three-quarters of pupils follow general classroom and task-setting instructions well.

301 They are usually quick to respond to questions, using short phrases to make themselves understood.

302 Nearly all pupils read simple printed text with understanding, most of them using glossaries effectively.

303 In written work, about two-thirds of pupils use proper sentences, not just phrases or fragments.

304 Most pupils with special educational needs, when working with well-focused support, do as well as their classmates.

#### **Key Stage 4**

305 Over three-quarters of pupils listen and understand well. They grasp the main points of what their teachers say or what they hear from authentic recordings.

306 About the same proportion read simple printed texts effectively so that they understand the gist and major points.

307 Around a quarter of pupils write well. They use a good range of language, making effective use of different tenses. In the best work, pupils select at times a natural turn of phrase which conveys meaning with precision.

#### **Shortcomings**

##### **Key Stage 3**

308 Fewer than a quarter of pupils read well independently, or speak with consistent accents and intonation.

309 Around a quarter of pupils have difficulties in adapting model sentences in order to convey their own messages.

310 About four-fifths of pupils make only limited use of tenses apart from the present. They tend not to divide their written work appropriately into paragraphs.

##### **Key Stage 4**

311 With few exceptions, pupils speak hesitantly, without initiative or spontaneity.

312 In conversation or when reading aloud they lack fluency and good intonation.

313 Over three-quarters have great difficulty in coping with unprepared situations or unpredictable elements. Their responses to questions are brief, often only single words. Boys in particular are reluctant to speak.

314 Around three-quarters make errors in basic grammar such as verb endings and gender and number in nouns and adjectives.

315 In their written work, around half of the pupils use only a narrow range of language structures. Elementary errors in grammar and spelling are frequent, so that meaning is not conveyed clearly.

<b>Art</b>
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**Key stage 3: Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings

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

### **Good features**

#### **Key Stage 3**

- 316 The majority of pupils in Y7 have below average skills and experience of art. They make rapid progress in acquiring the essential visual language of line, tone, pattern, texture, shape, form and space in a range of two- and three-dimensional experiences. Colour is understood and often applied with flair. Overall, current achievement in craft skills by the end of Y9 matches the expected national average.
- 317 They develop a knowledge of Celtic pattern forms and an appreciation of the art of other cultures. They respond to the work of artists and are able to enrich their own work with new techniques.
- 318 They make progress in recording from direct observation and when drawing imaginatively. When working with computers to create portraits they achieve outstandingly good creative images. They also know how to use computers to research art. They are acquiring an appropriate art vocabulary. Writing skills are often poor, but they make good progress in recording facts and in expressing their opinions about art.
- 319 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the attention given to their individual needs. Gifted and talented pupils are stretched when working with visiting artists. Pupils with English as an additional language make progress, helped by language aids produced within the department.

#### **Key Stage 4**

- 320 Pupils make good progress building on their previous skills and knowledge. Overall, their examination results closely match the national average at the higher grades.
- 321 They are developing well as independent creative artists. They acquire and exploit new and more demanding craft skills. They are able to choose from a small range of different media and show that they can express their own ideas in both two- and three-dimensional forms, in both traditional and new technologies.
- 322 They show imagination in creative shoe design. They show skill when printmaking. They work confidently in a variety of scales. They know how to use their sketchbook-work to record, explore and develop their ideas.
- 323 From their study of Kathe Kollwitz, they demonstrate that they are able to use their art to express their moral concerns.
- 324 Because they visit art galleries, they have a growing awareness and appreciation of both historical and contemporary art. Through working with visiting artists they develop specialist skills in printmaking and painting.

325 They support their artwork with useful annotation and most express their personal views of art and artists in their written responses.

### Shortcomings

#### Key Stage 3

326 Pupils are not as familiar with a range of artists associated with Wales as would be expected. Although they are all regularly engaged in a useful self-assessment process, they are not readily familiar with the standards associated with national curriculum levels, and this hinders better achievement.

#### Key Stage 4

327 Pupils are not as familiar with designers as they are with painters. Although all pupils are regularly engaged in a useful self-assessment process, they cannot readily identify the difference in standard between the higher examination grades and this limits their potential for achievement.

## Music

**Key Stage 3: Grade 4:** Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

**Key Stage 4: Grade 4:** Some good features, but shortcomings in important areas

### Good features

#### Key Stage 3

328 Approximately four-fifths of pupils in Y7 sing with enthusiasm and three quarters of these can maintain a part in a three part ensemble. Y9 pupils can perform short solo pieces of Latin American music on classroom instruments with some degree of accuracy.

329 Pupils of above average ability, make good progress in improvising and composing short pieces of music to given stimuli.

330 Pupils can appraise pieces of music using appropriate technical language, directly linked to the elements of music.

#### Key Stage 4

331 Pupils of higher ability demonstrate fluency and accuracy in instrumental performance.

332 The compositions of Y11 pupils show some knowledge of structure and form, and a limited development of musical ideas. All compositions are enhanced by effective use of ICT.

333 Pupils' written and oral responses demonstrate some understanding of the technical and expressive features of music. Pupils in Year 11 of above average ability are able to discriminate within the musical elements.

## Shortcomings

### Key Stage 3

- 334 Pupils find it difficult to maintain a part in ensemble vocal performance. In these performances, tone is uneven and diction is unclear.
- 335 Solo and group instrumental ensembles lack conviction. Many pupils find it difficult to keep in time to a common pulse, and inaccuracies of rhythm and pitch affect the fluency of the performance.
- 336 Pupils of below average ability and those with special educational needs do not achieve high enough standards in musical performance.
- 337 The ability and experience of pupils in selecting and combining sounds are limited. Compositions lack variety and musical interest.
- 338 In appraising activities, many responses are brief and superficial and do not focus on the musical elements.

### Key Stage 4

- 339 The performing skills of several pupils in Y10 and Y11 are limited. Errors in rhythm and pitch are evident and performances lack fluency and conviction.
- 340 Two-thirds of compositions lack revision and refinement. Musical ideas are not developed effectively and there is limited harmonic understanding. More able pupils are not fully extended in these activities.
- 341 Answers to appraising activities are brief and lacking in detail. Pupils of average and below average abilities are reluctant to use technical language linked to the musical elements in their responses.

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

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

### Good features

#### Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

- 342 Pupils are appropriately attired, listen attentively, respond appropriately and work positively and consistently throughout the lesson.
- 343 Pupils work well together and collaborate effectively. They can organise themselves independently of the teacher and officiate themselves.
- 344 Pupils understand the benefits of leading an active healthy lifestyle and the long term effects of exercise on physical health. They work enthusiastically in health-related exercise activities and can sustain their efforts for prolonged periods.

345 Pupils with additional educational needs are integrated well into the classes and make good progress, commensurate with their abilities.

### **Key Stage 3**

346 In swimming, most pupils sustain their efforts to refine their techniques with noticeable improvements in body position in both front crawl and backstroke.

347 In basketball, most pupils show good spatial awareness when applying their sending, receiving and signalling skills in a small-sided conditioned game. Many pupils utilise their dribbling and shooting skills effectively and are adept at decision-making.

348 In gymnastics, many pupils improve their body management in activities focusing on flight.

349 In hockey, many pupils demonstrate good sending and receiving skills whilst performing a push pass and stopping the ball.

### **Key Stage 4**

350 Most pupils are competent swimmers. In water polo, they show good skills when sending and receiving a ball and the majority employ good techniques when dribbling a ball and shooting at a target.

351 In GCSE theory, pupils work well, independently of the teacher, and use subject specific terminology, appropriately.

352 In GCSE badminton, many pupils practise and refine their skills of serving into a clearly defined target area with improved success rates, using both forehand and backhand techniques.

353 Many of the pupils demonstrate a good range of skills and apply them in a game to outmanoeuvre opponents by adopting a range of strategies.

354 In gymnastics, the majority of pupils show good body tension and clarity of body shape when developing their sequences on the floor. They show skill and control in developing and refining their movement sequences, using a wide range of apparatus.

### **Shortcomings**

#### **Key Stage 3**

355 In hockey, the majority of pupils cannot apply sending and receiving skills in a conditioned game.

356 In gymnastics, a minority of pupils demonstrate little control when performing basic skills. A majority show insufficient core stability in balances and lack of clarity of shape whilst performing sequence work.

357 Most girls have not developed the competence to evaluate their own or other pupils' work effectively.

#### **Key Stage 4**

358 In GCSE theory, a few pupils experience difficulty in recalling key components of fitness, appropriate to different activities, and in applying their knowledge.

## Religious education (including religious studies)

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

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

### Good and outstanding features

#### Key Stage 3

- 359 Pupils across the ability range demonstrate outstanding knowledge and understanding of the main religions and what is distinctive to each.
- 360 They can compare key beliefs in different faiths and show what effect these beliefs have on the life of a believer.
- 361 They have outstanding knowledge of how religious beliefs can be communicated through creative activities.
- 362 Pupils with additional learning needs give outstanding accounts of the beliefs and activities of different religious traditions.
- 363 The more able pupils apply knowledge, skill and critical imagination in interpreting religious language.
- 364 Pupils achieve good standards in selecting, organising and communicating information through a wide range of written tasks and challenges.

#### Key Stage 4

- 365 Pupils can express and argue a position on moral issues well and recognise strengths and weaknesses in the argument.
- 366 They show a good understanding of the religious perspective upon moral and social issues.
- 367 They compare and contrast well what different religions believe about a range of human concerns, for example Euthanasia and can explain why people with religious beliefs respond in different ways.
- 368 Pupils with additional learning needs achieve well. All gained GCSE accreditation last year.
- 369 The more able show good understanding when explaining how faiths can be challenged by contemporary ideas and issues.

### Shortcomings

#### Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

- 370 A minority of girls are reluctant to contribute voluntarily to class discussion.
- 371 In key stage 4, a minority of pupils are reluctant to offer a reflective personal viewpoint.
- 372 Absences from lessons impede the progress of a small number of pupils.

## Drama

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

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

### Good features

#### Key Stage 3

- 373 Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in practical work. They make good progress throughout the course in developing the skills of drama.
- 374 They can work effectively in small groups to devise a short performance to interest or entertain an audience.
- 375 They are able to control and project their voices. Most listen attentively.
- 376 They can use movement and gesture to represent emotion, and most pupils can use these skills to perform a short mime.
- 377 Pupils confidently manage the pace of their presentations.
- 378 They have a basic grasp of creating character and improvising persuasive dialogue.
- 379 Most can consider and present social issues through short devised pieces.

#### Key Stage 4

- 380 Pupils make good progress throughout the course in using a range of drama skills to plan and present plays and extracts. They show a good understanding of positioning, the use of stage props, and good use of intonation and accent.
- 381 Pupils of all abilities write thoughtful reviews and comparisons of professional performances that they have attended, making perceptive comments about theatre design and recognising the significance of lighting, scenery, costume and sound.
- 382 They take an independent approach to preparing journals for their practical work. Most of these show that pupils of all abilities have a strong interest and involvement in the work.
- 383 All pupils co-operate and interact well in groups. The co-operation in some groups is outstanding.

### Shortcomings

#### Key Stage 3

- 384 Pupils make limited use of drama terminology. Their progress in considering and evaluating their own performances and those of others is not fully developed because they have restricted opportunities to do so.

385 A few pupils are inconsistent in speaking audibly when performing their devised presentations.

#### **Key Stage 4**

386 The pace of performance of a few pupils is not secure and needs further development.

387 For a few pupils, voice projection and variation and tone are still uncertain. They need to develop these areas to complete the set of skills they already have.

### **Business and communication systems**

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

#### **Good features**

388 A majority of pupils have a good understanding of business processes and can apply their knowledge to a cross section of tasks.

389 Higher attaining pupils complete a range of assignments to a high standard.

390 A majority of pupils in Y10 use spreadsheets competently to analyse data in a variety of business situations. Y10 pupils also understand the need to structure customer surveys carefully to eliminate bias in their responses.

391 Many pupils in Y11 are developing a good understanding of the impact information technology has had on the workplace.

392 A majority of pupils have a good understanding of the functions of different software packages. They are also able to explain how different input, output and storage devices are used in different business organisations.

393 The majority of pupils use ICT effectively in assignments.

#### **Shortcomings**

394 A minority of pupils have a less secure recall and understanding of some of the communication systems studied.

395 Some pupils are too reliant on their teachers to guide them through many stages of their tasks.

396 A minority of Y11 pupils did not achieve their target grades in the mock examinations.

## Catering

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

### Good features

- 397 Pupils develop sound knowledge and understanding of the structure and organisation of catering establishments.
- 398 They study health and safety regulations which they apply well in class activities. With very few exceptions, pupils achieve a Basic Food Hygiene Certificate.
- 399 Pupils acquire valuable first hand evidence of commercial methods and equipment when they visit a local catering outlet. Around three-quarters of the pupils also complete a work experience placement and record successfully their experiences in their coursework projects.
- 400 Research and investigation into individual food-related health problems are well undertaken. The presentation of coursework projects and menu cards demonstrates good ICT skills.
- 401 Practical skills are good, given time constraints of lessons. Pupils choose relevant food items, prepare logical work plans and cost and evaluate outcomes.
- 402 Appropriate catering terminology is used when pupils describe aspects of their work.

### Shortcomings

- 403 Pupils do not use ICT for dietary analysis.
- 404 Team and large scale food production skills are underdeveloped.

## Child development

**Key Stage 4: Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

### Good features

- 405 Pupils acquire sound knowledge of issues relating to the care and development of babies and young children. A good proportion of pupils apply this understanding well to class and project tasks.
- 406 They study issues relating to family life and parenting and develop a good awareness of cultural and community aspects.
- 407 Research and investigational skills are good. Pupils plan and carry out purposeful visits to individual children. They record detailed observations in their child study folders and more-able pupils make meaningful comparisons to statistical norms.

408 Pupils generally plan well for practical coursework tasks and produce acceptable food products to meet the dietary requirements of children.

409 ICT skills are good and used well for research and the presentation of work.

### **Shortcomings**

410 A significant minority of Y10 pupils lack focus and commitment in class, hindering their progress and achievement.

411 Recall of knowledge and understanding of nutrition is weak. A number of Y11 pupils are unable to identify the nutritional value of the products they prepare for children.

412 Currently around two-fifths of coursework projects are solely descriptive with insufficient analysis and reasoned judgements.

## **Electronic products**

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

### **Good features**

413 Coursework folios show good investigative work including the use of the computer to find information and fashion design solutions. Research of existing products is well used in the design process by all pupils.

414 Nearly all pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of basic electronic circuitry and peripheral components.

415 Use of sophisticated electronic software to design circuits is well understood and used by most pupils.

416 The most able pupils show good levels of flair and imagination in their solution to the problem of ensuring motorists can see joggers in the dark by using light circuitry attached to clothing.

### **Shortcomings**

417 Too many pupils do not evaluate effectively their design outcomes against the original specification.

## **Engineering**

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

### **Good features**

418 Almost all pupils can read effectively an engineering drawing.

- 419 Well over three-quarters of pupils show good skills in logging the processes involved and the tools used in making their project.
- 420 Almost all of the pupils have very good practical skills using hand tools.
- 421 The majority of pupils can use equipment such as pedestal drills, lathes, milling machines and heat treatment facilities well to carry out the completion of their project.
- 422 Well over two thirds of the pupils understand component dimensions and tolerances and practise these skills effectively.

### **Shortcomings**

- 423 A small number of pupils are over dependent on their teachers when carrying out basic tasks and process.
- 424 Presentation skills are the weaker element of pupils' project files with limited output in some instances.

<b>Health and social care</b>
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**Key Stage 4: Grade 2:** Good features and no important shortcomings

### **Good features**

- 425 Pupils are developing a sound understanding of the structure and function of community health and social care services. They describe accurately the roles of informal and professional carers.
- 426 Pupils are able to relate the work they do in class to realistic care settings via research and personal contact with a range of clients.
- 427 Knowledge of related issues is good. Pupils can identify the importance of care value principles and are able to describe factors that affect physical, intellectual, emotional and social development at different life stages.
- 428 Research and investigational skills are good and pupils extract relevant information from a range of resources including current media information. They also prepare pertinent questionnaires and successfully interview clients to explore their health, lifestyle and eating habits.
- 429 Numeracy skills are used appropriately to measure physical health. Pupils analyse their results well to identify potential risks to health and set targets for improvement.
- 430 Portfolio assignments are completed successfully and presentation is enhanced by use of ICT.

## Shortcomings

- 431 Irregular attendance hinders the progress and completion of work of approximately a third of pupils.
- 432 Not all pupils take advantage of the spell-check facility to improve their work.

<b>Sociology</b>
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**Key Stage 4: Grade 3:** Good features outweigh shortcomings

### Good features

- 433 Overall, pupils have good levels of knowledge and understanding and recall their previous learning successfully. They make good progress in applying their knowledge and understanding to a range of social situations and contemporary problems.
- 434 Pupils use subject-specific vocabulary accurately and in the correct context.
- 435 Most pupils have a sound understanding of the methodology and conceptual basis of the subject. They can use various methods of sociological enquiry and research, such as designing relevant questionnaires and surveys. They extract relevant and accurate information from a variety of sources of evidence.
- 436 Most Y11 pupils can provide interesting and relevant observations during class discussions relating to the nature versus nurture debate. They can also successfully define the significance of deviance and delinquency during their discussions on crime.
- 437 Problem-solving skills develop well when pupils work in groups or pairs.
- 438 The majority of pupils produce good quality pieces of extended writing, developing balanced arguments as they do so. Most have compiled a body of detailed notes to enable them to revisit their learning.

### Shortcomings

- 439 The written work of a significant number of pupils lacks adequate depth and detail to enable them to address fully the problems with which they are confronted.
- 440 Pupils' presentation of written work is inconsistent. Some pupils have difficulty with the demands of punctuation, spelling and English expression.
- 441 A minority of pupils are reluctant to participate in class discussions and to provide extended answers to questioning. Oral responses in class tend to be brief.
- 442 A significant number of pupils find it difficult to express the conclusions to their investigations clearly and in the necessary depth.

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

The school acknowledges the inspection report and is pleased that the inspectors recognised and highlighted so many good features about the school.

We are delighted that the inspection team reported so positively on the quality of care, support and guidance for learners. We believe that this positive ethos and commitment to the welfare of our pupils is an essential ingredient in ensuring that those who entrust their education to us are valued and enjoy school.

The school also appreciates the inspectors' recognition of the school's journey and the progress made in many areas. We value the support provided by parents and other education providers in helping us on this journey. The number of positive parental questionnaires returned was greatly appreciated.

Where inspectors have identified shortcomings these largely reflect those already contained in the school's priorities for action.

The school will work with the Governing Body and the LEA to formulate an action plan to address the inspectors' recommendations. Continuing to raise standards of achievement will feature in the action plan as one of our major priorities for the future.

Improving Key Skills and the use of assessment data to improve students' learning, together with enhancing monitoring and evaluation are aspects that we believe we can address confidently.

A copy of the action plan will be sent to all parents. The Governor's Annual report to Parents will report on the progress the school is making on the inspection recommendations.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Clywedog
School type	Community
Age-range of pupils	11 to 16 years of age
Address of school	Ruthin Road, Wrexham.
Postcode	LL13 7UB
Telephone number	01978 346800

Headteacher	Mrs. Janette Smith
Date of appointment	September 2003
Chair of governors/ Appropriate authority	Mrs. Jeanette Whiteley
Reporting inspector	Mr. T O'Marah
Dates of inspection	05/03/07 to 08/03/07

## 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	165	182	214	242	229	-	-	1032

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	55	3	57.4

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	17.5 : 1
Average teaching group size	23.74
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	75.7

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	School
Autumn 2005	94.2	92.9	91.9	93.8	92.1	-	-	93.0
Spring 2006	92.4	89.5	89.3	91.2	89.8	-	-	90.4
Summer 2006	91.1	88.9	87.3	87.1	96.3	-	-	89.8

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	16.4
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	77

## Appendix 3

### National Curriculum Assessment Results. (Teacher Assessments only) End of Key Stage 3

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results: 2006														
Total number of pupils in Y9: 235														
Percentage of pupils at each level														
		D	N	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP	
English	School	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.9	11.5	27.7	42.1	12.3	4.7	0.0	0.0	
	National	0.2	0.7	0.4	0.3	1.5	7.4	21.6	35.8	23.9	8.0	0.0	0.2	
Mathematics	School	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.4	34.0	20.4	26.0	7.7	0.0	0.0	
	National	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	1.1	7.4	18.4	25.0	30.4	15.78	0.0	0.6	
Science	School	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.4	5.5	23.0	38.7	23.4	8.1	0.0	0.0	
	National	0.2	0.8	0.3	0.1	0.5	6.0	18.8	34.1	27.6	11.5	0.0	0.1	

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

Percentage of pupils attaining at least level 5 in mathematics, science and either English or Welsh (first language)	
by Teacher Assessment	
In the school	43
In Wales	58

## Public Examination Results:

<b>For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ</b>	
Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2006	176
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	35

<b>The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2006:</b>	School	UA	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	89	88	88
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	41	50	54
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	88	87	86
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	28	36	40
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	100	100	98
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	64	72	77
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent	96	94	93
attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent	4	6	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	5	5	3
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1	N/A		
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2	N/A		

UA Unitary Authority

## Appendix 4

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

Prior to the inspection, full discussions were held between the registered inspector and the headteacher based on the school's self-evaluation report and its improvement plan. In addition, meetings were held with the staff of the school, with parents and with the governors. Questionnaires were returned by 96 parents and were analysed by the inspection team. Whole school and appropriate subject documents were collected and reviewed by inspectors. All of this information was used to inform the organisation of the inspection and the deployment of inspectors.

During the inspection, all subjects of the curriculum taught at the school were inspected in detail and a total of 190 lessons was observed. All teachers at the school were seen teaching at least once. Formal and informal interviews were held with pupils and the full daily life of the school was observed. The inspection team reviewed pupils' work in exercise books and folders and looked at pupils' work diaries and the school reports sent to their parents.

During the week the inspection team saw 29 tutor periods and 2 year group assemblies. Visits were made to a wide range of clubs and activities. Interviews were held with all learning managers (heads of department), and with those teachers and managers holding positions with whole school responsibilities.

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

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

Team Member	Responsibilities
Terry O'Marah	Registered Inspector: Key Questions 1;2;5;6
Mike Snow	Lay Inspector; Contributions to Key Questions 1;3;4;5
Glyn Davies	Science; Business studies; Key Question 3
Lynn Bithell	English: Key Question 2B: Literacy
Alan Edwards	Mathematics; Key Question 7; Numeracy
Heddwyn Evans	Religious education; Key Question 4
Mary Crandon	Welsh; Bilingualism
Keith Hopkins	Design and technology; Information technology and Information communications technology
Margaret Herbert	Design and technology and vocational courses; Wider key skills
Anne Newman	History; Sociology
John Radford	Geography
Martin Williams	Modern foreign languages
Eric Forster	Art
Susan Williams	Music
Michael Fitzgerald	Physical education
Elizabeth Hinkley	Drama
David Jones	Science
Eithne Hughes	Peer Assessor
Gareth Lewis	School Nominee

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### Acknowledgement

The Registered Inspector and his Team wish to record their thanks to the pupils, staff and governors of Ysgol Clywedog for their tolerance and co-operation.