

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

A Report on the Quality of Education in

**Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy
Ffordd Nebo
Llanrwst
Conwy
LL26 0SD**

School Number: 6624035

Date of Inspection: 28 January 2008

by

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Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy 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 Dyffryn Conwy took place between 28/01/08 and 31/01/08. An independent team of inspectors, led by Neil Trevor Jones 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:

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

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **standard** inspection.

Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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Context

The nature of the provider

1. Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy is a naturally bilingual community comprehensive school for pupils and students between 11-18 years of age. It is maintained by Conwy Local Educational Authority (LEA). Currently, it has 768 pupils, including 116 students in the sixth form (Y12 and Y13), a number that is slightly lower than at the time of the last inspection (783). The number of pupils accepted into the school has gradually fallen over the last five years, and the number of pupils in each year group varies from 139 in Y11 to 121 in Y7. Including the headteacher, there are 52.5 (full-time equivalent) teachers. There are 48 full-time teachers and nine part-time.
2. The school serves the town of Llanrwst and the whole of the Conwy Valley. There are 16 primary schools in the catchment. According to the school, its catchment area is neither very prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Nine per cent of the pupils are registered as being entitled to receive free school meals, a figure which is lower than the county average (14%) and the national percentage (17%). 98.5% of pupils are of white ethnic origin. Four pupils receive support to learn English as an additional language.
3. Forty pupils (some 6% of Y7-Y11 pupils) have statements of special educational need (SEN), which is much higher than the national percentage (3.4%).
4. In addition, there are 41 pupils on either the 'school action' or 'school action plus' stages of the SEN Code of Practice. The National Curriculum (NC) has been adapted for 13 pupils and disapplied for one pupil. Three pupils are cared for by the Local Authority.
5. Slightly over half the pupils (51%) come from homes where Welsh is the main language of the home and some 48% from homes where English is the main language. Over 60% of pupils follow the Welsh first language course.
6. In February 2005, the school was united on to one site, as part of Conwy LEA's 'Private Finance Initiative' (Three Schools).
7. The current headteacher was appointed to the school in September 1992. The school was previously inspected in April 2002.
8. The school received a 'standard' inspection in January 2008.

The school's priorities and targets

9. The school's main priorities, as identified in the current school development plan (SDP), for 2006-2009 are to:
 - improve the attitude, of 'English-medium' pupils in Y9 and Y11 (September 2006) , in order to improve their standards of achievement;
 - emphasise the key skills during Key Stage (KS) 3 and KS4
 - follow up on pastoral issues that were not given consideration during 2005-06;
 - adopt new assessment procedures for KS3;
 - evaluate the 'alternative' curriculum and extend the vocational curriculum;

- pay attention to the curricular aspects of 'primary/secondary' links;
- further extend academic courses at 16+ to include adults ('Lifelong Learning').

10. The following are the school's quantitative targets for 2008:

| Key stage 3 Indicators | % at level 5 or higher at the school |
|--|---|
| Welsh | 90 |
| English | 76 |
| Mathematics | 76 |
| Science | 76 |
| Core Subject Indicator | 54 |
| Difference between performance of girls and boys | 12 |

| Key stage 4 Indicators | % gaining the qualification |
|--|------------------------------------|
| % entered for at least 1 GCSE | 100 |
| 5 GCSE subjects at grades A* - C | 72 |
| 5 GCSE subjects at grades A* - G | 95 |
| Core Subject Indicator | 48 |
| % leaving without qualifications | 0 |
| Difference between performance of girls and boys | 8 |
| % unauthorised absence | 0.3 |

Summary

11. Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy is a good school. The outstanding quality of the care and guidance the school gives to its pupils and the sound knowledge staff have of them, enables the pupils to receive their education in a supportive and civilised environment.
12. Even so, the school's self-evaluation practices have not developed sufficiently, in order to effectively influence strategic planning.

Table of grades awarded

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

Standards

13. The grades awarded for standards in the subjects inspected are as follows:

| Subject | Key Stage 3 | Key stage 4 | Sixth Form |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Welsh (second language) | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Mathematics | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| Information technology | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| History | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Art | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| French | 2 | 2 | 2 |

14. In the lessons observed in the above subjects, the percentage of lessons gaining the various grades in KS3, KS4 and the sixth form are as follows:

| | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Key Stage 3 | 7% | 66% | 24% | 3% | 0% |
| Key Stage 4 | 4% | 75% | 17% | 4% | 0% |
| Sixth Form | 25% | 67% | 8% | 0% | 0% |
| Whole School | 9% | 69% | 19% | 3% | 0% |

15. The percentage of lessons awarded a Grade 1 and 2 is substantially higher than the Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG) target for schools by 2007, which calls for standards in 65% of lessons to be Grade 2 or better. The percentage of lessons awarded a Grade 3 or higher, namely 97%, is only 1% lower than the WAG's target of 98% for 2010, as noted in 'Vision for Action'.
16. In the six subjects inspected, there were outstanding features in art, information technology and mathematics lessons and important shortcomings in only two lessons.
17. Overall, pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed have improved since the last inspection.

Quality of the results of tests and external examinations

18. Over the last three years, there has been a gradual decline in pupils' performance in tests and assessments at the end of KS3.
19. In 2007, the school's results, in comparison with the performance of similar schools in 2006, (2007 results for Wales have not yet been published) are above the median for Welsh but in the lowest quartile for English, maths, science and the core subject indicator (CSI).
20. The school's performance in GCSE examinations has been inconsistent in comparison with similar schools across Wales, in respect of levels of free school meals.
21. In 2007, with the school having fallen to the under 10% free school meals group, as in 2005, each of the four key indicators are in the lowest quartile.
22. In 2005, the percentage of pupils who gained five A*-C grades is similar to the average percentage for schools in the county and Wales. In 2006 and 2007, the school's percentage of five A*-C grades was higher than the average for schools in the county and Wales.

23. The performance of students in the 'A' level examinations has been consistently very good over the last three years.
24. The average points' score for students in the school was higher than that in the county and Wales in 2005, 2006 and 2007. In addition, the percentage of students who succeeded in gaining A-C grades in 'A' level examinations was considerably higher than the county and Wales in each of the last three years.

Standards in the key skills

25. Pupils and students achieve good standards in their key skills.
26. The literacy skills of pupils and students are good. Pupils' and students' information and communications technology (ICT) skills and bilingual competence are good. Students' numeracy skills are good but the ability of pupils in KS3 and KS4 to apply and use numeracy skills across the curriculum continues to develop.

Pupils' progress in learning

27. The progress pupils make in learning shows good features that outweigh shortcomings. Students make good progress.
28. In many lessons, pupils and students work to the best of their ability and complete unfamiliar tasks through effort and concentration.
29. Pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) make good progress and attain standards appropriate to their ability.
30. Pupils are not completely clear about their strengths and weaknesses in every subject and as a result they are not always aware of what is necessary in order to improve the standard of their work.
31. Students make very good progress in the courses they follow and as a result, they are in a strong position to move forward to the next stage of learning, whether that is in the workplace or in higher education.

Standards in personal, social and learning skills

32. The attitudes of pupils and students towards learning are positive and mature.
33. Pupils' standards of behaviour are good, in lessons and around the school. Pupils are courteous and friendly and the school is a civilised and disciplined community. Students behave outstandingly and develop to become confident young adults.
34. Pupils' average attendance over the last three years is 89.9%, which is lower than the WAG's current target of 93%. The school's strategies and methods of monitoring and promoting attendance have led to an improvement in the school's attendance figures for last term.
35. Pupils and students are prepared well for their roles in the future, in the workplace, in education and in the community but the pupils' ability to work independently has not been fully developed.

Quality of teaching and training

36. The table below shows the quality of teaching in lessons observed throughout the school (101 lessons):

| Quality of teaching | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| All lessons | 16% | 60% | 21% | 3% | 0% |

37. The percentage of lessons awarded a Grade 1 or Grade 2, 76% surpasses the national picture described by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in her annual report for 2005-2006. Nationally, the quality of teaching is good (Grade 1 and 2) in 69% of lessons and 17% of the teaching is grade 1.
38. The percentage of lessons awarded a Grade 1 or Grade 2, 76%, is slightly lower than the WAG target for 2010 of 80%.
39. Features of the lessons where teaching is outstanding include:
 - very high expectations in relation to standards of work and behaviour that motivate and challenge individual pupils and students according to age, ability and understanding;
 - teachers' very thorough subject expertise and knowledge;
 - very constructive working relationship with the pupils and students, and
 - very effective use of penetrating questioning to expand pupils' responses.
40. Across all lessons, there are many good features. These include:
 - detailed planning and good preparation for individual lessons and series of lessons;
 - clear lesson objectives being shared and used, and in the vast majority of cases being reviewed at the end of a lesson;
 - use of a good range of activities and resources, including some use of the interactive whiteboard, which adds to the liveliness of lessons, and
 - appropriate pace and timing for activities.
41. Shortcomings observed in the teaching include:
 - lack of opportunities for pupils to work independently;
 - long introductions to lessons and a lack of variety in the teaching methods, and
 - a lack of appropriate planning to develop pupils' bilingual skills.
42. There are good features and no important shortcomings in the school's assessment systems.
43. The school has a clear assessment policy and guidance is given to departments on how to develop their own assessment policies. However, there is some inconsistency in the assessment practices, across, and within subjects in KS3 and KS4. Work is marked regularly but in a number of cases the marking does not offer sufficiently specific feedback on how to improve the standard of work.
44. The school satisfies the statutory requirements for NC assessments in KS3, together with the regulations of examining boards at KS4 and the sixth form. The school complies with the assessment requirements for pupils and students with ALN.

The extent to which teaching meets the range of learners' needs

45. There are many good features in the way in which the school satisfies the needs and interests of pupils and students, which include:
 - flexibility of the KS4 curriculum, that allows open choices to each pupil and which provides suitable programmes for pupils of different abilities and aptitudes;

- very good links with primary schools in the catchment, which ensures continuity and progression in the curriculum across KS3 and KS4;
 - the provision of an 'alternative' curriculum for some pupils in KS4, with the school responding positively to the needs of individuals, and
 - the breadth of provision in the sixth form, that leads mainly to 'advanced' level qualifications. The majority of courses are available in Welsh and English.
46. The opportunities for pupils and students to improve their key and basic skills are developing in the school. Although each subject across the curriculum contributes towards developing the key skills, there is no coherent planning process in place to deliver and monitor the provision.
47. The school has gained the Basic Skills Agency's Quality Mark.
48. The curriculum is enriched through offering a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These activities contribute well towards the personal development of pupils and students.
49. Pupils' and students moral, cultural and social development is promoted well by the school. It is a caring community, which naturally nurtures pupils' moral and social values. Even so, planning for pupils' spiritual development is less evident.
50. Partnerships between the school and parents, other schools and institutions reinforces the learning experiences of pupils and students and includes the following good features:
- numerous links, especially in the sixth form, with the local community and employers;
 - good links with a local college of further education, and
 - close working relationship with outside agencies, such as the social services, health service and the police.
51. There are many good features in the way that the learning experiences offered respond to the needs of employers and the wider community.
52. The good features include:
- appropriate links with employers, in order to develop pupils' and students' understanding of the world of work, and
 - purposeful visits by a substantial number of representatives from the business world who give presentations, lead groups and discuss the needs of businesses with pupils in KS4.
53. The school takes positive steps to ensure equal opportunities for every pupil, with an opportunity for each pupil to participate in all aspects of the curriculum.

The quality of the support and guidance provided for pupils and students

54. The school has a happy and caring ethos. The relationship between the pupils themselves and between pupils and staff, is outstanding. The pastoral system is based on structures that are planned and managed very effectively. A team of committed heads of year and effective class tutors ensure that pupils receive care of an outstanding quality. The knowledge that heads of year and tutors have of their pupils is outstanding.

55. Very effective use is made by the school of the external support services such as the county's health, welfare and education departments and the police.
56. The school's links with the 16 primary schools in its catchment are outstanding. Pupils settle in well at the school and testify that they feel at home very quickly.
57. There are outstanding procedures at the school for monitoring pupils' punctuality, attendance, behaviour and performance.
58. There are clear procedures to ensure the health and well-being of pupils and students, which include encouraging pupils to adopt healthy habits, and which cover physical activity and fitness and healthy drinking and eating.
59. The quality of the provision for pupils with ALN is good. The school operates a clear policy for SEN which meets the statutory requirements of the Code of Practice for Wales.
60. The school offers equal opportunities for each individual whatever their social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background. Special support is provided by the school for some pupils in KS4 who show signs of disaffection with the usual provision.
61. A notable feature of the school's work is the very effective arrangements and processes that exist to eliminate any form of oppressive behaviour, including bullying. The school has established an ethos whereby discrimination or harassment are not tolerated and truly succeeds in ensuring a friendly and communal atmosphere.
62. New buildings at the school ensure full and easy access for disabled pupils. There is also a Disability Equality Scheme and a clear accessibility strategy.

Leadership and Management

63. There are good features that outweigh shortcomings in the strategic management of the school.
64. The headteacher's vision is based on his good knowledge of the pupils and students and his aim of challenging them to give of their best in all that they do. This vision is shared by members of the senior management team (SMT), the governors and all the staff.
65. Managers ensure that the school is a civilised community with sound values, in order to ensure education of the highest quality and that in a caring climate, giving esteem to everybody's achievements.
66. The school has responded well to national and local priorities, promoting inclusion and working closely with the primary schools in the catchment. The school continues to develop links with other schools, the further education college and industry in order to enrich the curricular provision for pupils and students in the 14-19 age range.
67. The process of setting quantitative targets is not sufficiently based on pupils' previous performance and does not ensure that the targets set are challenging and realistic.
68. Overall, middle managers operate effectively. However, the link between the SMT and departments, in order to ensure that thorough self-evaluation

processes and detailed strategic planning are consistent in each subject, is still developing.

69. The school's comprehensive self-evaluation report recognises the school's strengths together with areas for development in the future.
70. Leaders and managers use appropriate methods to gather evidence for self-evaluation, which includes analysing data, examining pupils' work and observing lessons. However, these processes are not focussed sufficiently on standards and are not consistent across the school.
71. The SDP includes the schools aims and priorities for a period of three years. It is not updated annually, and as a result, does not reflect the school's current priorities in sufficient detail and there is no appropriate link between the findings of the self-evaluation processes and the SDP. The SDP does not include detailed criteria in order to evaluate the success of strategies for improvement.
72. A good cross-section of the local community forms the governing body. They share the headteacher's vision for their school and have a good knowledge of the work and performance of the school.
73. The role of the governing body as a critical friend is still developing. Each of the governors is linked with a department at the school and this gives them a detailed understanding of the quality of teaching, the standards pupils achieve and increases their understanding of the school's needs and priorities.

Effective and efficient use of the school's resources and value for money

74. The school has appointed a sufficient number of teachers with the appropriate qualifications to deliver the curriculum effectively. Teachers are supported well by a team of learning assistants and administrative staff.
75. There are sufficient resources for teaching a full and balanced curriculum.
76. The new building is an outstanding resource to support a range of subjects and activities. It is a light, airy building, which is well maintained and creates a motivating learning environment for the pupils. Access for the disabled is very good.
77. The school uses its resources effectively and efficiently.
78. The school's budget is carefully monitored by a member of the SMT and the administrative officer, who provide termly financial reports for the governors.
79. Effective use is made of the staff, ensuring the best use of their time, experience and expertise. In-service training (INSET) reflects the priorities set by the school, departmental needs and elements identified for the professional development of individual teachers.
80. The link between the SDP, which is prepared every three years, and the school budget has not been sufficiently developed.
81. Taking into consideration pupils' and students' standards of achievement and attainment, the good quality of teaching, the good curricular provision and the outstanding quality of the support and guidance for all pupils and students, the school gives good value for money.

How well the school has addressed the issues identified in the previous inspection

82. The school has responded well to the key issues identified in the previous inspection. However, the quality of departmental self-evaluation procedures continues to be inconsistent.

Recommendations

The school needs to:

- R1: *maintain the outstanding and good standards achieved and raise standards in the subjects where there are shortcomings;
- R2: continue to operate strategies to improve pupils' attendance, in order to attain the target set for secondary schools by the WAG;
- R3: ensure that challenging and realistic targets, based on previous performance, are set, at school, department and individual pupil level, and are used to positively influence standards of achievement and attainment;
- R4: ensure that the self-evaluation processes, at school and departmental level, have a focus, are based on first-hand evidence and lead to annual development plans that are monitored against agreed success criteria, and
- R5: disseminate the good and very good practices that exist at middle management level, and ensure consistency of implementation across the subjects.

**The SDP for 2006-09 includes steps to deal with this recommendation.*

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

Standards

Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

83. This grade agrees with the school's self-evaluation.

Standards in KS3 and KS4

84. The following are the grades awarded for standards in the six subjects that were inspected:

| Subject | Key Stage 3 | Key Stage 4 |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Welsh second language | 2 | 2 |
| Mathematics | 3 | 3 |
| Information technology | 2 | 2 |
| History | 3 | 2 |
| Art | 1 | 1 |
| French | 2 | 2 |

85. In the lessons observed in the above subjects (53 lessons in KS3 and KS4), the percentage of lessons to which each grade was awarded in KS3 and KS4 is as follows:

| Standards | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| KS 3 | 7% | 66% | 24% | 3% | 0% |
| KS 4 | 4% | 75% | 17% | 4% | 0% |
| KS3 and KSA4 | 6% | 70% | 20% | 4% | 0% |

86. The percentage of lessons awarded a Grade 1 and 2 is substantially higher than the WAG's target for schools for 2007, which calls for standards in 65% of lessons to be Grade 2 or better. The percentage of lessons awarded a Grade 3 or higher, namely 96%, is only 2% lower than the WAG's target of 98% for 2010, as noted in 'Vision for Action'.
87. In the six subjects inspected, there were outstanding features in art, information technology and mathematics lessons and important shortcomings in only two lessons.
88. Overall, pupils' standards of achievement in the lessons observed have improved since the last inspection.

Quality of the results of tests and external examinations

Key Stage 3

89. Over the last three years, there has been a gradual decline in pupils' performance in tests and assessments at the end of KS3.
90. In 2005, results of tests placed the school in the highest quartile for Welsh, below the median for English and in the lowest quartile for mathematics, science and the CSI, in comparison with similar schools across Wales, in respect of levels of free school meals.
91. In 2006, results of assessments placed the school in the highest quartile for Welsh, above the median for English and the CSI, below the median for science and in the lowest quartile for mathematics.
92. In 2007, the school's results, in comparison with the performance of similar schools in 2006, (2007 results for Wales have not yet been published) are above the median for Welsh but in the lowest quartile for English, mathematics, science and the CSI.
93. The WAG's value added statistics for 2005-06 for mathematics and science place the school in the lowest quartile of similar schools for adding value to the percentage of pupils who gain level 5 or better in these subjects.

Key Stage 4

94. The school's performance in GCSE examinations has been inconsistent in comparison with similar schools across Wales, in respect of levels of free school meals.
95. In 2005, in comparison with similar schools with regard to free school meals, the school was in the lowest quartile in respect of the number of pupils gaining five or more grades A*-C at GCSE, the CSI and the average score, and below the median for the percentage gaining five A*-G grades.

96. In 2006, the school was above the median for the CSI and the percentage gaining five A*-C grades and below the median for the other two indicators.
97. In 2007, with the school having fallen to the under 10% free school meals group, as in 2005, each of the four key indicators are in the lowest quartile. Had the school remained in the same group of schools as in 2006, one indicator would have been above the median, two below the median and one, the CSI, in the lowest quartile.
98. In 2005, the percentage of pupils who gained five A*-C grades is similar to the average percentage for schools in the county and Wales. In 2006 and 2007, the school's percentage of five A*-C grades was higher than the average for schools in the county and Wales.
99. In 2005, the CSI was slightly lower than the county and Wales averages. In 2006, the CSI was substantially higher than the county average and higher than the national average. In 2007, the CSI was lower than the county average and substantially lower than the national average.
100. Over the last three years, girls have performed better than boys in the GCSE examinations, in respect of the five A*-C and CSI indicators. However, the gap in the performance of the genders is less than the Welsh averages.
101. The percentage of pupils who gain a 'C' grade in Welsh at GCSE is consistently higher than the county and national averages. The percentage of pupils that gain a grade C or better in mathematics is lower than that of Wales in each of the last three years and lower than the county in two of the three years.

Standards in the key skills

102. Pupils' standards in the key skills are good.
103. Standards of oracy are good in Welsh and English. Pupils can describe in detail, express an opinion and in discussing with each other and with their teachers, they come to meaningful conclusions.
104. Listening standards are good. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to the contributions of their fellow-pupils and as a result respond appropriately.
105. Standards in reading are good in both languages. Pupils read fluently, conveying meaning and feeling.
106. Pupils' writing skills have good features that outweigh shortcomings in KS3. Standards of writing are good in both languages in KS4, and pupils can write to meet a variety of needs, making appropriate use of technical and subject vocabulary.
107. There are good features that outweigh shortcomings in pupils' numeracy skills. In both key stages, there is evidence of good standards. A small number of pupils have difficulty in using and applying number in everyday situations.
108. Pupils' standards in ICT are good. Pupils use their ICT skills effectively to convey information and in data handling but standards of modelling are still developing.
109. Pupils' bilingual proficiency is good. At their best, they can move from one language to another easily, orally and in writing.

Pupils' progress in learning

- 110. Good features outweigh shortcomings in the progress pupils make in learning.
- 111. In many of the lessons, pupils work to the best of their ability and complete unfamiliar tasks through effort and concentration.
- 112. Pupils with ALN make good progress and attain standards appropriate to their ability.
- 113. Pupils are not completely clear of their strengths and weaknesses in every subject and as a result, they are not always aware of what is needed in order to improve the standard of their work.
- 114. Analysis of value added data shows that pupils have performed slightly lower than expected, when comparing the school with similar schools across Wales.

Standards in personal, social and learning skills

- 115. Pupils' attitudes towards learning are positive and mature. They show an interest in their work and they concentrate and persevere with the tasks set.
- 116. The standard of pupils' behaviour is good, in lessons and around the school. Pupils are courteous and friendly and the school is a civilised and disciplined community.
- 117. Pupils' average attendance over the last three years is 89.9%, which is lower than the WAG's current target of 93%. The school's strategies and the methods of monitoring and promoting attendance have led to an improvement in the school's attendance figures for last term. Attendance in lessons during the week of the inspection was close to the WAG's target.
- 118. Pupils are punctual at the beginning of the school day and to lessons during the day.
- 119. Pupils are prepared well for their roles in the future, in the workplace, in education and in the community but their ability to work independently has not been fully developed.
- 120. Pupils make good progress in their personal, social and moral development. They work well together and show respect, care and concern for others.
- 121. Pupils show a good understanding of matters relating to equal opportunities and are sensitive towards the diversity of beliefs and traditions within society.
- 122. Pupils develop a good understanding of their community, their locality and of the world of work; this prepares them well for achieving their aspirations in the future.

Standards in the sixth form

- 123. In the sixth form, standards of achievement are good with no important shortcomings.

124. The table below gives the grades awarded to standards in the specific subjects inspected:

| Subject | Sixth Form |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Welsh second language | 2 |
| Mathematics | 2 |
| Information technology | 1 |
| History | 2 |
| Art | 1 |
| French | 2 |

125. In the lessons observed in the above subjects (12 lessons), the percentage of lessons to which each grade was awarded in the sixth form was as follows:

| Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 25% | 67% | 8% | 0% | 0% |

126. Standards of achievement in the sixth form lessons are good, with 92% of all lessons observed being graded either 1 or 2; no important shortcomings were seen in any area.

Quality of results in external examinations

127. The performance of students in the 'A' level examinations has been consistently very good over the last three years.
128. The average points' score for students in the school was higher than that in the county and Wales in 2005, 2006 and 2007.
129. In addition, the percentage of students who succeeded in gaining A-C grades in 'A' level examinations was considerably higher than the county and Wales in each of the last three years.

Standards in key skills in the sixth form

130. Students' standards in the key skills are good.
131. Students' literacy skills are good in English and Welsh. Standards of speaking are good and students use a broad vocabulary confidently in presenting information and expressing an opinion. Students listen intently to each other and to their teachers, responding appropriately. Standards in reading and writing are good in both languages.
132. Students' numeracy skills are good. Students are confident in handling number and apply their number skills well to relevant subjects across the curriculum.
133. Students' ICT skills are good and they use their skills to enrich and raise the standards of their work.
134. Students' bilingual proficiency is good.

Students' progress in learning

135. The progress students make in their learning is good.
136. Students display positive attitudes towards learning and a responsible attitude towards their work.

137. They are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and understand what they need to do in order to improve and raise the standard of their work.
138. Students make very good progress in the courses they follow and as a result, they are in a strong position to move forward to the next stage of learning, whether that is in the workplace or in higher education.

Standards in personal, social and learning skills

139. Students' standards in their personal, social and learning skills are good.
140. Students display positive attitudes towards their work and contribute well in lessons.
141. They behave outstandingly and develop to become confident young adults.
142. Students' attendance and punctuality in their lessons are good.
143. Students work together well, helping each other and displaying a sensitive appreciation of the views of others.
144. Overall, students are prepared well for their roles in the future, they have positive values relating to equal opportunities and diversity and a very good understanding of the world of work and their community.

The quality of education and training

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

Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

145. In its self-evaluation report, the school awarded itself a Grade 2 for this key question. The findings of the inspection team agree with those of the school.
146. The table below shows the quality of teaching in lessons observed throughout the school (101 lessons):

| Quality of teaching | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| All lessons | 16% | 60% | 21% | 3% | 0% |

147. The percentage of lessons awarded a Grade 1 or Grade 2, 76%, surpasses the national picture described by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools in her annual report for 2005-2006. Nationally, the quality of teaching is good (Grade 1 and 2) in 69% of lessons and 17% of the teaching is grade 1.
148. The percentage of lessons awarded a Grade 1 or Grade 2, 76%, is slightly lower than the WAG target for 2010 of 80%.

Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

149. The table below shows the distribution of grades awarded for the quality of teaching in all lessons observed in KS3 and KS4 (87 lessons)

| | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| KS3 | 17% | 60% | 19% | 4% | 0% |
| KS4 | 13% | 63% | 22% | 2% | 0% |

150. Features of the lessons where teaching is outstanding include:
- very high expectations in relation to standards of work and behaviour that motivates and challenges individual pupils and according to age, ability and understanding;
 - teachers' very thorough subject expertise and knowledge;
 - very constructive working relationship with the pupils. Each pupil is respected as an individual without exception, and
 - very effective use of penetrating questioning to expand pupils' responses.
151. Across all lessons, there are many good features. These include:
- detailed planning and good preparation for individual lessons and series of lessons;
 - clear lesson objectives being shared and used with the pupils, and in the vast majority of cases being reviewed at the end of a lesson;
 - effective use of pair and group work;
 - use of a good range of activities and resources, including some use of the interactive whiteboard, which adds to the liveliness of lessons;
 - appropriate pace and timing for activities;
 - good questioning techniques to ensure understanding;
 - sound and constructive class management;
 - appropriate and consistent encouragement and praise to individuals, and
 - problem solving a natural aspect of the teaching.
152. Shortcomings observed in the teaching include:
- lack of opportunities for pupils to work independently;
 - not setting definite time limits for tasks and this impairs on the pace of the lesson, and as a result, time is short at the end of the lesson to reinforce pupils' learning;
 - lengthy introductions to lessons and a lack of variety in the teaching methods, and
 - a lack of appropriate planning to develop pupils' bilingual skills.
153. There is a very good working relationship between pupils and teachers. Teachers know the pupils well and offer them guidance, support and praise. This leads to positive attitudes towards learning amongst the vast majority of pupils.
154. The school creates a caring atmosphere and offers learning experiences where each pupil is respected as an individual whatever their gender, race or disability, together with sensitive and effective support.
155. A number of teachers are generous with their time during the lunch hour, to offer additional support in work sessions that reinforce the learning, and to enrich pupils' cultural experiences.
156. Pupils with ALN are taught well and integrated fully into classroom activities. The vast majority of teachers have a thorough knowledge of these pupils and

prepare appropriately for them. The learning assistants offer effective support to individuals and groups of pupils. However, in some instances, the planning is not specific enough to give these pupils the best support.

157. The vast majority of pupils can use both languages fluently. However, there is no purposeful planning to provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop and use their bilingual skills in subjects across the curriculum.
158. Differentiated provision for pupils of different abilities across the departments is inconsistent. Although there are good practices in some departments, there is not enough appropriate planning for meeting the needs of the more able and talented pupils.

The sixth form

159. The table below shows the distribution of the grades awarded to the quality of teaching in lessons observed in the sixth form (14 lessons).

| Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 22% | 57% | 21% | 0% | 0% |

160. Features of the lessons where teaching is outstanding include:
- very high expectations and constant encouragement for students to develop to be independent learners;
 - teachers' up to date and thorough subject knowledge;
 - very effective support and comprehensive and in depth preparation for external examinations;
 - friendly, constructive and respectful working relationships, leading to outstanding motivation amongst the students, and
 - regular opportunities for students to develop a very good range of key skills.
161. The good features of the teaching include:
- opportunities for students to constructively evaluate their own work and the work of others;
 - lessons planned well with clear objectives and progression from one lesson to the next;
 - penetrating questioning with opportunities for everyone to respond;
 - good use of a range of teaching techniques and of varied tasks that result in students persevering to study work in more depth, and
 - good pace and timing to lessons and activities.
162. Shortcomings observed in some lessons include:
- limited teaching techniques, resulting in students being passive learners, and
 - lack of opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning.

How thorough is assessment and how is it used to plan and improve learning?

163. The school's assessment systems show good features and no important shortcomings.
164. There is some inconsistency in the assessment practices, across, and within subjects in KS3 and KS4. Work is marked regularly but in a number of cases the

marking does not offer sufficiently specific feedback on how to improve the standard of work. The quality of the feedback offered in some departments, such as Welsh, English and French, is good or very good. In the best examples, work is corrected and there is clear and specific feedback on how to improve and attain higher standards of achievement.

165. The school has a clear assessment policy and guidance is given to departments on how to develop their own assessment policies. However, every department has not succeeding in fully responding to the requirements. As a result, the quality of guidance and the opportunities pupils and students receive for self-assessment and for peer- assessment is insufficient in some departments.
166. The grades for achievement, effort and quality of the homework for each pupil are recorded three times a year. This information is used effectively to monitor the progress of individuals and to recognise and respond to those who are underachieving.
167. The school is establishing appropriate arrangements to standardise and moderate teachers' assessments at the end of KS2 and KS3.
168. The school satisfies the statutory requirements for NC assessments in KS3, together with the regulations of examining boards at KS4 and the sixth form. The school complies with the assessment requirements for pupils and students with ALN.
169. Parents and carers receive three reports a year - two interim reports and one full report. The interim reports record pupils' attainment, effort and behaviour, together with their record of attendance.
170. The full annual report is comprehensive, treats each pupil and student as an individual and in the majority of subjects, offers valuable comments on how to improve. Pupils are given opportunities to report on their work and there is room for parents to respond to the report and an invitation for them to discuss any aspect of the report.

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

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|---|
| Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings |
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171. The findings of the inspection team correspond to the school's self-evaluation.

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

172. The curriculum:

- meets the pupils' learning needs and reflects the aims for statutory school age pupils set out in the Education Acts of 1996 and 2005;
- meets legal requirements;
- is broad and balanced for every pupil, including pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and ALN;
- provides equal opportunity and access for all pupils and students; and
- provides personal and social education, work-related education and careers education and guidance, in accordance with the guidelines of the WAG.

173. There are a number of good features in which the school meets the learning needs and interests of the pupils and students. These include the:
- flexibility of the KS4 curriculum, which allows every pupil to choose freely and provides suitable programmes for pupils of different abilities and aptitudes;
 - establishment of very good links with feeder primary schools, which ensures continuity and progression in the curriculum across key stages 2 and 3;
 - provision of an 'alternative' curriculum for some pupils at KS4, with the school responding positively to the needs of individuals; and
 - breadth of provision in the sixth form, leading mainly to Advanced level qualifications. Most courses are available through Welsh and English.
174. Each subject within the key stages has an appropriate time allocation and clashes in students' timetables in the sixth form are rare.
175. Opportunities for pupils and students to improve basic and key skills are developing at the school. 'Numeracy' and 'literacy' lessons have been introduced into the Y7 curriculum, together with a weekly lesson of ITC for all KS3 pupils.
176. In the sixth form, a good number of students gain a formal Key Skill accreditation.
177. Although all subjects across the curriculum make a contribution to the development of key skills, there is no coherent planning process in place to deliver and monitor the provision.
178. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Agency's Quality Mark.
179. The curriculum is enhanced by offering a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These contribute well to pupils' and students' personal and cultural development. The programme includes:
- cultural experiences through a variety of competitions and performances. A large number of pupils are members of the 'Urdd'; dramatic or musical productions are performed on alternate years;
 - a wide range of sports clubs and teams;
 - the provision of other clubs and activities to promote pupils' learning outside normal school hours; and
 - local and foreign visits which allow pupils and students to widen their horizons and gain an understanding of other peoples' lives.
180. The school promotes well the moral, cultural and social development of its pupils and students. The school is a caring community that nurtures the pupils' moral and social values naturally. A comprehensive personal and social education (PSE) programme is planned to promote and ensure that pupils and students:
- show respect for each other, staff and visitors to the school;
 - are able to distinguish right from wrong;
 - accept responsibility and show self-discipline; and
 - demonstrate care and concern for others.

181. Planning for spiritual development is less evident across the curriculum. Although the school complies with the requirements for collective worship, the morning tutorial period ('munud i feddwl') does not sufficiently promote pupils' and students' spiritual development.
182. The school's partnerships with parents, other schools and institutions reinforce pupils' and students' learning experiences well, and include the following good features:
- numerous links, especially in the sixth form, with the local community and employers;
 - good links with a local further education college and an initial teacher training institution;
 - workshops led by local artists; and
 - close working with external agencies such as social services, the health service and the police.

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

183. There are many good features in the way the learning experiences offered meet the needs of employers and the wider community.
184. The good features include:
- appropriate links with employers, in order to develop pupils' and students' understanding of the world of work,
 - work experience periods for Y10 and Y12 that are carefully arranged and raise pupils' and students' awareness, and
 - purposeful visits by a substantial number of representatives from the business world who give presentations, lead groups and discuss the needs of businesses with pupils in KS4.
185. The *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* has been incorporated into the schemes of work of each subject. Curricular and extra-curricular activities support pupils' and students' understanding and appreciation of the Welsh dimension. Planned opportunities to nurture bilingual skills are limited in a number of subjects.
186. The school takes positive steps to ensure equal opportunities for every pupil, with an opportunity for each pupil to participate in all aspects of the curriculum.
187. The school pays increasing attention to aspects of sustainable development and global citizenship, in the curriculum and in the school's practices. As yet, this area has not been developed to its full potential.
188. The school, as yet, has not formally sought the opinions of employers about the relevance of its curriculum. Even so, it is aware of the requirements of the local economy and staff in several departments have beneficial links with businesses in the area.
189. The school is involved in a number of beneficial activities that develop pupils' and students' entrepreneurial skills. This is begun in Y9 with a Careers Wales entrepreneurial workshop on designing, producing and marketing goods. The 'Dynamo' project is introduced in Y9, Y10 and Y11 to promote entrepreneurship.

In Y12, there are examples of groups who have undertaken Young Entrepreneurs activities.

190. The school reflects national priorities well. Inclusion, improving the transfer period from primary to secondary school and entrepreneurship have been addressed well. The 14-19 'Learning pathways ' agenda is a current priority.

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

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|--|
| Grade 1: Good with outstanding features |
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191. The findings of the inspection team agree with the school's self-evaluation.

The quality of the care, guidance and support for learners

192. The quality of the support and guidance given to pupils is good with outstanding features.

Outstanding features

193. The school has a happy and caring ethos. The relationship between the pupils themselves and between pupils and staff is outstanding. The pastoral system is based on structures that are planned and managed very effectively. A team of committed heads of year and effective class tutors ensure that pupils receive care of an outstanding quality. The knowledge that heads of year and tutors have of their pupils is outstanding.
194. Very effective use is made by the school of the external support services such as the county's health, welfare and education departments and the police. The welfare officer has an office in the school and this enables him to deal quickly with any problem that arises. There is a close working relationship with all the external agencies and a weekly meeting is held, chaired by the school's head of inclusion. The role of the head of inclusion is a key factor in the success of the inter-agency collaboration and her commitment and care of the pupils is outstanding.
195. The school's links with the 16 primary schools in its catchment are outstanding. Pupils settle in well at the school and testify that they feel at home very quickly. The head of Y7, the school's language co-ordinator and the SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) visit each school in the catchment area. The language co-ordinator ensures that there are appropriate linguistic arrangements in place for the pupils who are transferring. One member from each department in the school has responsibility for primary-secondary links. This ensures continuity in learning methods and a strong subject link between the school and its feeder primary schools.
196. There are outstanding procedures at the school for monitoring pupils' punctuality, attendance, behaviour and performance. The success of the strategies for monitoring behaviour, with immediate response, is reflected in the low number of pupils who are excluded from the school. During the last three years, there were no permanent exclusions and the number of temporary exclusions is very low.
197. The school works very closely with other agencies to ensure the well-being of pupils. The school has a clear policy and specific guidelines for the protection of

children. The headteacher is the person with responsibility for this aspect and all teachers have received training in the area of child protection.

Good features

198. The school prepares impartial information and support to pupils about all the opportunities available and enables them to choose appropriate courses at KS4 and in their careers post-16. Personal and social education (PSE) modules and tutorial periods reinforce the guidance well. By the provision of suitable handbooks, the school also offers further appropriate guidance for pupils.
199. The school has an effective careers programme and there is good collaboration between the school and the Careers Company. The school has been awarded the Quality of Teaching and Careers Guidance award.
200. The school has a comprehensive and up to date PSE programme which meets the needs of the ACCAC Framework. There are opportunities in PSE lessons to discuss relevant and contemporary issues. Particular attention is paid to aspects of health education and careers guidance and good use is made of external speakers to enrich pupils' experiences.
201. There are clear procedures to ensure the health and well-being of pupils and students, which include encouraging pupils to adopt healthy habits, and which cover physical activity and fitness and healthy eating and drinking.
202. Through the school council, pupils and students have an opportunity to express opinions on different issues relevant to them. In addition, the school has a forum for each year that meets regularly and feeds its ideas to the council. This arrangement ensures that more pupils feel part of the school's consultation process. Discussions in the forums are mature and relevant.
203. A number of pupils have been trained through the Childline in Partnership (CHIPS) scheme to support other pupils who have problems. There are opportunities during lunchtimes for pupils to meet and although the scheme is not fully established, a small number of pupils testify that they appreciate the service.

Quality of the provision for additional learning needs (ALN)

204. The quality of the provision for pupils with ALN is good.
205. The very good links with primary schools enables the school's SENCO to identify those pupils who need additional support at an early stage and to respond effectively.
206. The school operates a clear policy for SEN that meets the statutory requirements of the Code of Practice for Wales. The SENCO prepares a detailed report for the governing body annually.
207. There are 40 pupils with a statement and 74 pupils on the SEN register. One pupil has been disapplied from one NC subject due to dyslexia and appropriate work has been arranged for him. The eight pupils in the moderate learning difficulties unit (MLD) follow individual timetables and are disapplied from some aspects of the NC.
208. Individual educational plans (IEPs) are prepared for each pupil and are reviewed twice a year. Targets are set that reflect the needs of the pupils but at

times, the target set is insufficiently specific. The targets for pupils with SEN are glued inside the cover of the pupils' subject books, in order to ensure that the subject teachers are aware of them. This is good practice.

209. Pupils with SEN are successfully integrated into mainstream classes and have access to all areas of the curriculum.
210. A team of 19 assistants provides good support to pupils in their lessons and the work of assistants is co-ordinated well by the SENCO. Not every teacher plans purposefully enough to make the most effective use of the assistants in the classroom.
211. The school deals particularly effectively with pupils whose behaviour and attitude are likely to impair their progress and the progress of others and are, as a result, in danger of being excluded from the school. Through close collaboration between the SENCO, heads of year and the head of inclusion, appropriate and very effective arrangements are made to support these pupils.
212. The 'Alternative Curriculum' provision is very successful with some pupils in Y10 and Y11, who are in danger of becoming disaffected with the normal curriculum. These pupils receive a range of experiences which include courses in the school, vocational courses at a local college of further education and weekly work experience. These pupils have also participated in a number of community activities which have enriched their experiences.

The quality of provision for equal opportunities

213. The quality of the provision for equal opportunities is good across the school and very good in KS4.
214. The school offers equal opportunities for each individual whatever their social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background. The school provides special support for some pupils in KS4 who show signs of disaffection with the usual provision.
215. There are appropriate arrangements and policies in place to promote gender equality and to challenge stereotyping.
216. The school has an appropriate policy to promote racial equality and the school actively promotes good relationships between races in its daily life.
217. A notable feature of the school's work is the very effective arrangements and processes that exist to eliminate any form of oppressive behaviour, including bullying. The school has established an ethos whereby discrimination or harassment are not tolerated and truly succeeds in ensuring a friendly and community atmosphere.
218. New buildings at the school ensure full and easy access for disabled pupils. There is also a Disability Equality Scheme and a clear accessibility strategy.

Leadership and management

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

Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

219. This grade is lower than the grade the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation report. The inspection team judged that the school's arrangement for setting challenging and realistic targets was an important shortcoming.

220. The grade awarded for this key question, Grade 3, does not agree with the grade awarded to key question 1, namely Grade 2. Even though the overall grade awarded for achievement in the six subjects was Grade 2, there is inconsistency in whole-school and departmental strategic planning methods.

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

221. The headteacher's vision is based on his good knowledge of the pupils and students and his aim of challenging them to give of their best in all that they do. This vision is shared by members of the SMT, the governors and all the staff.

222. Managers ensure that the school is a civilised community with sound values, in order to ensure education of the highest quality and that in a caring climate, giving esteem to everybody's achievements.

223. The managers ensure that all pupils receive equal opportunities. No pupils are disadvantaged because of their linguistic or cultural background.

224. The school has responded well to national and local priorities, promoting inclusion and working closely with the primary schools in the catchment area. The school collaborates successfully with other secondary schools, the local further education college and local businesses. The school continues to develop these links in order to enrich the curricular provision for pupils and students in the 14-19 age group.

225. The SDP, in its current form, is not an effective tool for long-term strategic planning.

226. The process of setting quantitative targets is not sufficiently based on pupils' previous performance and does not ensure that the targets set are challenging and realistic.

227. Overall, middle managers operate effectively. However, the link between the SMT and departments, in order to ensure that thorough self-evaluation processes and detailed strategic planning are consistent in each subject, is still developing.

228. The school ensures that staff and departments have appropriate support and training. The subsequent processes for tracking and evaluating improvements in performance are insufficiently developed.

229. Two members of staff have completed courses that result in the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers.

230. Through restructuring of the ancillary and administrative staff, the school has succeeded in meeting the requirements of the national workload agreement for teachers.

How well governors fulfil their responsibilities

231. A good cross-section of the local community forms the governing body. They share the headteachers vision for their school and have a good knowledge of the work and performance of the school.

232. The role of the governing body as a critical friend is still developing. Each of the governors is linked with a department at the school and this gives them a detailed understanding of the quality of education, the standards pupils achieve and increases their understanding of the school's needs and priorities. However, this good practice is not consistent in each department.

233. Governors ensure that the school meets with course and other statutory requirements.

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

| |
|---|
| Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings |
|---|

234. This grade is lower than the grade the school awarded itself in its self-evaluation report. The team judged that there is inconsistency in the standard of the self-evaluation processes and that the links between the self-evaluation processes and strategic planning are insufficient.

How effectively is the school's performance monitored and evaluated

235. The school's comprehensive self-evaluation report recognises the school's strengths together with areas for future development. It also uses the criteria associated with the seven key questions of the Common Inspection Framework, listing the relevant sources of evidence to support judgements.

236. The inspection team's findings support a number of the school's judgements. The grades awarded by the inspection team correspond to those of the school in four of the seven key questions, but are lower for three of the questions, namely key questions 5, 6 and 7.

237. Leaders and managers use appropriate methods to gather evidence for self-evaluation, which include analysing data, examining pupils' work and observing lessons. However, these processes are not focussed sufficiently on standards and are not consistent across the school.

238. There is no direct link between the findings of the school's self-evaluation report and the SDP. The findings of self-evaluation processes do not result in the recognition of developmental priorities and the implementation of appropriate strategies.

239. There is inconsistency in the quality and detail of departmental self-evaluations. In the best practice, detailed data analysis, the examination of pupils' work and lesson observation lead to identifying particular aspects which need improvement. However, some of the departmental self-evaluation documents do not give appropriate attention to subject standards and are not based sufficiently on first

hand evidence. As a result, the self-evaluation reports are descriptive rather than analytical in nature.

240. School - based training on self-evaluation and data analysis procedures have not as yet refined the self-evaluation processes sufficiently across all departments.

241. The self-evaluation procedures provide opportunities for all stakeholders, including parents and pupils, to contribute to the process. There is an opportunity for teachers and parents to complete an annual questionnaire to express their opinions on aspects of pupils' well-being and care. The encouraging response to this method of seeking opinions leads the school towards extending the use and frequency of such questionnaires. The school council is an effective tool for regularly conveying pupils' opinions to the SMT.

How effective is the process of planning in order to ensure improvement

242. The school's self-evaluation report is a sound foundation for creating appropriate development plans for departments and the whole school.

243. The SDP includes the schools' aims and priorities for a period of three years. The plan is not updated annually and, as a result, does not reflect the school's current priorities in sufficient detail and there is no appropriate link between the findings of the self-evaluation processes and the SDP. The SDP does not include detailed criteria in order to evaluate the success of strategies for improvement.

244. The standard of departmental development planning is inconsistent. In the best practice, there is a definite link between departmental self-evaluations and developmental priorities, which focus appropriately on raising standards. This good practice is not consistent across the subjects.

245. Pastoral development plans are of a good standard.

246. The school ensures sufficient resources for supporting its main priorities and objectives. However, the link between the strategic planning process as identified in the SDP and the school budget is insufficient.

247. The school can show that a number of steps taken have led to improvements in standards or provision. However, a lack of success criteria and quantified targets hinders the process of evaluating measurable improvement in standards.

248. The school has responded well to the key issues identified in the previous inspection:

- standards in Welsh second language have risen from 'satisfactory' to 'good' in the sixth form;
- arrangements for religious education in the sixth form now meet statutory requirements;
- standards of French oral work in KS4 has risen from 'unsatisfactory' to 'good'.

249. However, there continues to be inconsistency in the quality and detail of departmental self-evaluations.

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

Grade 2 : Good features and no important shortcomings

250. The grade awarded by the inspection team differs from the Grade 1 awarded by the school in its evaluation report. The team is of the opinion that there is not a strong enough link between the school's budget and the school development plan.

The adequacy, suitability and use of staffing, learning resources and accommodation

251. The school has appointed sufficient qualified, experienced and specialist teachers to deliver the curriculum effectively. Teachers employed on short-term contracts because of staff absences and those teaching outside their main expertise are suitably supported by the school. The support for Newly Qualified Teachers is appropriate.

252. Teachers are well supported in their work by a team of teaching assistants and by administrative staff. All contribute significantly to the progress of the pupils.

253. The school has achieved the 'Investors in People' standard on two occasions.

254. There are sufficient resources to deliver a full and balanced curriculum. The school has invested significantly in computer hardware to allow good access for most subjects.

255. The school is well equipped with Interactive Whiteboard facilities and a substantial sum has been earmarked to develop this facility throughout the school.

256. There is no library in the school. Textbooks, reference material and reading texts are available from the departments to support learning.

257. The new school building is an outstanding facility to support a range of subjects and activities. It is light, airy and well maintained providing a stimulating learning environment for its pupils. Access for those with physical disabilities is very good.

258. All teachers have their own specialist rooms in departmental suites. In most departments, subject displays are informative and supportive of the pupils' learning.

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

259. The school uses its resources effectively and efficiently.

260. A member of the SMT and the school bursar monitor expenditure carefully and present financial reports on a termly basis to the governors.

261. The school projects that approximately 12% of the school budget will be in reserve at the end of the current financial year. This is a higher percentage than the percentage (5%) recommended by the Audit Commission.

262. The school has responded appropriately to most of the issues noted in the Local Authority's recent audit report (2006). Only one issue required attention in the follow-up audit (December 2007).

263. Managers work closely with the Public Finance Initiative partner who owns the building, to ensure the facilities are utilised as well and as fully as possible.
264. Members of staff are well deployed by senior managers, to ensure that best use is made of the staff's time, expertise and experience.
265. In-service training reflects the priorities set by the school, departmental needs and identified elements of the professional development of individual teachers. A few teachers and learning support staff require further in-service training to prepare them for the nature of the learning, or pupil- behaviour, difficulties they may encounter.
266. There are appropriate arrangements to provide protected time for teachers, for planning, preparation and assessment.
267. The SDP does not identify, in sufficient detail, the costs and implications in terms of resources of the priorities noted. The link between the SDP, which is produced every three years, and the annual school budget, is not sufficiently developed.
268. Taking into consideration the standards of achievement and attainment of pupils and students, the good quality of teaching, the good curricular provision and the very good quality of the support and guidance for all pupils and students, the school provides good value for money.

Standards achieved in subjects and areas of learning

Welsh first language

- Key Stage 3: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings**
Key Stage 4: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings
Sixth Form: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings

269. All pupils, apart from a very small number who follow the alternative curriculum, sit the full GCSE course. Results at GCSE are consistently higher than the county and national averages and a high percentage succeed in gaining grades A* and A.

Key Stage 3 Good features

270. Pupils' understanding of Welsh is good and, on the whole, they respond enthusiastically and correctly to the questions and stimuli of their teachers and fellow pupils.
271. The majority also use Welsh meaningfully outside the formal situations of the classroom and overall, this has a good effect on raising pupils' oracy standards.
272. The vast majority of pupils listen carefully to their teachers and fellow pupils and respond appropriately. The more able respond at length and develop their oracy skills very well.
273. They can also follow audio and video tapes selecting facts and ideas in order to complete specific tasks.
274. Overall, standards in speaking are good or very good and there is obvious progress in pupils' confidence by Y9. They can use the syntax and vocabulary

learnt previously well to complete oral tasks effectively using a fairly broad variety of linguistic patterns.

275. Reading standards are good across the ability range. The more able read aloud meaningfully and with appropriate intonation and pronunciation. Pupils across the ability range gather information from a wide variety of reading texts correctly and quickly to use in oral group work or individual written work.
276. The more able read extended texts independently for pleasure and have begun to keep a record of their work.
277. The more able pupils write well in a range of methods and for a fairly broad range of purposes. The more able produce extended pieces of writing with a good standard of accuracy.
278. Pupils with SEN make good progress. The more able pupils are challenged to develop their work and those pupils who need support receive it from the classroom assistants.

Shortcomings

279. The written work of a minority of pupils is often incomplete and contains too many spelling and grammatical errors.
280. A small number of pupils are unwilling to extend their written and oral responses.

Key Stage 4

Good features

281. Standards in oral work are very good and one of the pupils' strengths. Pupils discuss a wide range of subjects and succeed in expressing an opinion in group work situations on quite challenging topics. They respond to each other spontaneously and use patterns learnt previously, in KS3 and KS4, correctly and meaningfully.
282. The most able read aloud clearly, confidently and with appropriate pronunciation. They read interesting books for course work and pleasure. In their course work, they write at length in responding to characters and situations from the class novel.
283. Writing standards are good and this is reflected in their examination work and their course work. Pupils express an opinion on a wide and ambitious range of topics, on social and moral issues. They write at length correctly, on the whole, using a good variety of verb forms and syntax.
284. Pupils with SEN succeed in achieving according to their ability, and the talented pupils succeed in attaining an A* grade in their course work.

Shortcomings

285. A minority produce erroneous work with regard to standards of accuracy. They are unsure of mutations and at times use English words in their written work.
286. A small minority of pupils are unwilling to use Welsh for communication outside the classroom situation.

Sixth form

Good features

- 287. Students willingly converse naturally with teachers, fellow pupils and visitors. Their use of speech in informal situations is one of their strengths.
- 288. Students express an opinion knowledgeably in discussing characters and themes from their set books. They succeed in justifying that opinion with appropriate reasons and evidence.
- 289. Overall, they use literary appreciation terminology fairly confidently when discussing their set books orally and in writing.
- 290. Students read their own work and other set books confidently and with appropriate intonation.
- 291. They produce written course work of a good standard. They write successfully in a range of styles and vary the language according to the task and purpose.

Shortcomings

- 292. Weaker students make errors in mutation and syntax when producing extended written work.
- 293. Less able students in Y13 are reluctant to extend their oral responses.

| |
|--------------------|
| Mathematics |
|--------------------|

- Key Stage 3: Grade 3 - Good features outweigh shortcomings**
- Key Stage 4: Grade 3 - Good features outweigh shortcomings**
- Sixth Form: Grade 2 - Good features and no important shortcomings**

294. GCSE results in mathematics are significantly below the national average for the last two years and are also lower than those of similar schools

Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

Good features

- 295. Pupils understand concepts from previous lessons and can apply knowledge gained in other subject areas in a new context. For example, in their lesson on bearings, they were able to use six figure grid references (a skill acquired in geography).
- 296. Y11 pupils have understood the concepts used in their data handling coursework and can construct accurate diagrams.
- 297. Pupils can change fractions to decimals and percentages according to their ability and pupils throughout the two key stages have a good understanding of place value.
- 298. Basic algebraic skills are acquired quickly by Y7 pupils and they can form their own equations using appropriate notation.
- 299. Lower ability pupils have made appropriate progress in algebra by Y11 and can plot linear graphs from simple equations.
- 300. Pupils have a good understanding of transformations in the coordinate plane and are able to use dynamic software to explore translations and rotations.

301. Most pupils have arithmetic skills appropriate to their ability and these are applied successfully in lesson starter activities by pupils in all classes.

Shortcomings

302. Lower ability pupils do not make sufficient progress in KS3. For example, they have not understood the concepts of ratio and proportion by Y9.

303. Higher ability pupils do not progress as expected from KS3 to KS4 and do not develop concepts already encountered in Y9. For example, pupils do not understand Pythagoras' theorem in Y10 and are unclear regarding the relationship and difference between the sides of a right angled triangle and the areas attached to the sides.

304. In many lessons, pupils do not complete a sufficient amount of work and as a result their understanding of the mathematics covered is not developed.

305. Higher ability pupils do not complete challenging questions that would extend their knowledge. There is little or no difference between the outcomes of pupils of differing abilities within a set and this is especially true of Y7 in their mixed ability classes.

306. Pupils do not use and apply their mathematics outside the subject and do not explore mathematics independently. They are reluctant to comment on their work and find it difficult to use mathematics outside the context of examination or textbook questions.

307. Pupils have difficulty in interpreting statistics and statistical diagrams and do not comment on their significance.

Sixth Form

308. 'A' level results in mathematics are above the national average for the last two years and are higher than would be expected for students of similar ability

Good features

309. Students acquire new skills quickly and can use their prior knowledge to understand new concepts. Students in Y13 were particularly effective in using their algebraic skills to understand partial fractions.

310. Students in Y13 are able to express their mathematical ideas clearly and can explain the ideas that govern algebraic manipulation.

311. Algebraic skills are developed throughout the sixth form and especially in Y13. Students have a good grasp of calculus and its relationship with gradient and area.

312. Higher ability students are able to study independently to gain a further mathematics 'A' level and have an excellent understanding of all concepts covered.

313. In statistics, students understand the technique of calculating the expected value of a discrete random variable and are aware of the common misconceptions associated with this concept. Their understanding is further enhanced when encouraged to discover the misconceptions for themselves.

314. Students also complete a considerable amount of work in statistics in the short time available and prepare thoroughly for all examinations, having a good

understanding of the requirements of all the various papers in statistics, mechanics and pure mathematics.

315. The transition from GCSE is dealt with effectively and students extend their understanding of subjects such as surds.

Shortcomings

316. Students are unsure of the differences and similarities between the mean of experimental data and the expected value of a discrete random variable, and some students have not transferred data handling skills effectively from GCSE.
317. The concept of conditional probability is not well understood by students generally and they have difficulty in applying Bayes' formula as well as using tree diagrams quickly and efficiently.

| |
|-------------------------------|
| Information technology |
|-------------------------------|

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

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

Sixth Form: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features

318. Public examination results in the subject at GCSE level, grades A*-C, for the last two years have been higher than the national average.
319. In 2007, results in the subject at 'A' level showed very good progress, in comparing students' results with their GCSE results.

Key Stage 3

Good features

320. Pupils use a variety of software packages effectively and confidently in a number of contexts.
321. Pupils can create a simple database, analyse the information and present it in an appropriate form.
322. Good standards are achieved in the information communication element. Pupils can create presentations for specific audiences by using word processing, desktop publishing, spreadsheet and database software, as well as using the Internet to find relevant information.

Shortcomings

323. Year 9 pupils' skills in information handling and modelling have not been sufficiently developed and refined.

Key Stage 4

Good features

324. Pupils display a good understanding of the basic concepts of the subject. They recognise and can explain the specific features of the various software packages well.
325. Standards of information presentation are good and at times very good. Pupils can create a variety of types of work which is fit for purpose and audience.
326. The standard of pupils' course work is good. Pupils of all abilities plan thoroughly, follow solutions logically and select appropriate software.

327. Pupils benefit from regular and constructive feedback and additional opportunities outside the classroom to improve the quality of their work.

Shortcomings

328. There are no significant shortcomings.

Sixth form

Outstanding features

329. Students can apply information and knowledge to unfamiliar problems showing very detailed knowledge of a variety of ICT applications.

330. Students' course work and projects show computer skills of a very high standard. Students develop the work very skilfully and with a good degree of imagination.

331. Students take full advantage of constant and constructive feedback to produce course work of a very high standard – with some examples of outstanding work.

Good features

332. Students can select and adapt the appropriate techniques well in order to solve problems and can discuss the concepts of the subject with understanding, maturity and confidence.

Shortcomings

333. There are no shortcomings.

Modern foreign languages - French

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

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

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

334. Examination results in French at GCSE in 2006 were below national averages for passes at A*/C and also at A*/A. In 2007, results at GCSE were above average for passes at A*/C but below average at A*/A. The numbers entered are small.

335. These results are in line with pupils' ability.

336. Examination results at A level in French in both 2006 and 2007 were too small for valid comparisons to be made.

Key stage 3

Good features

337. Most pupils have good listening skills. They regularly identify relevant information from what they hear their teachers and native speakers say, and also from recordings of authentic French in a variety of situations.

338. Most pupils read and understand printed or clearly handwritten text well.

339. They build up a good vocabulary and variety of language structures, and quickly re-use them to extend the range of what they can say and write. This is particularly evident in the written work of Y8.

- 340. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well; samples of their written work in Y8 for example, whilst generally shorter than those of mainstream classmates, are hardly less accurate.
- 341. From Y7, many pupils develop good accents, pronouncing words well when reading aloud or in simple exchanges.
- 342. By Y9, most pupils hold short, structured conversations and write in sentences about things in the past, present or future. They usually make correct verb and adjective agreements.

Shortcomings

- 343. Many pupils are less confident when speaking independently. They do not use French for routine classroom purposes and are reluctant to start conversations.
- 344. By Y9, many pupils do not confidently use more than one tense outside the present.

Key stage 4

Good features

- 345. Most pupils quickly grasp the essential parts of what they hear or read.
- 346. They cope well with complex sentences and unfamiliar language.
- 347. Many of them make inferences from context, for example about opinions or attitudes.
- 348. In conversation, pupils' pronunciation is usually good. They speak accurately and are readily understood.
- 349. Where appropriate, most pupils respond to questions in proper sentences rather than single words or short phrases.
- 350. Most pupils write well. By Y11 they link and develop their ideas well and use a vocabulary and style well matched to the task.
- 351. Many pupils use a suitable range of different tenses to good effect.

Shortcomings

- 352. A minority of pupils lacks confidence in speaking at length. They hesitate unduly and do not pronounce words as well as they should.
- 353. A few pupils do not check their work carefully enough to reduce errors in grammar and spelling.

Sixth Form

Good features

- 354. Most students listen well and follow a variety of styles of authentic French, whether recorded or when talking directly to native speakers.
- 355. They read well and understand the main points of authentic newspaper or magazine texts.
- 356. Students speak and respond clearly and accurately.
- 357. Most students write well at length using complex sentences.
- 358. The ablest students speak and write with great accuracy, often using a natural turn of phrase to develop and argue their points well.

359. A few students read widely to bring added depth and illustration to their work.

Shortcomings

360. A few students are reluctant to take the initiative in conversation.

361. They also use a narrow range of language in written work and make simple spelling and grammatical mistakes.

History

Key Stage 3: Grade 3 - Good features outweigh shortcomings

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

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

362. Public examination results in the subject at GCSE level, grades A*-C, for the last three years have been higher than the national average.

363. Public examination results in the subject at AS and A2 level for the last three years have been higher than the national average.

Key Stage 3

Good features

364. Pupils across the key stage are aware of chronology and can place events within a timescale.

365. Pupils have appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding for their age and ability and can recall previous information successfully. The more able can make connections between main events, and follow the development of events along a time line.

366. Pupils across the key stage are aware of the importance of historical evidence. They can research, evaluate and appraise a variety of historical sources successfully. They can communicate their findings in the appropriate depth and in a variety of forms, orally and in writing and in the appropriate language key.

367. By the end of KS3, the majority of pupils can differentiate between factors that cause change in the short and long term, and understand the link between cause and effect in historical events.

368. They can understand that different interpretations of the same events by different historians are equally genuine.

369. Pupils have a sound grasp of historical terms and use them confidently.

370. Across the key stage, the majority of pupils present work according to their ability. The more able use polished language and present answers of quality.

Shortcomings

371. Some pupils make insufficient progress because they do not participate in activities.

372. Some pupils underachieve due to their passive demeanour.

Key Stage 4

Good features

373. Pupils have detailed knowledge of the period studied and almost all can set events within a chronological framework.

374. They can recall previous knowledge in order to place a subject in its context.
375. The more able understand how various events have created change and that people in the past would not interpret their situation as historians in the present do.
376. Pupils can explore historical sources and select the necessary evidence. They can successfully communicate their findings orally and in writing.
377. Pupils deal with examination questions and specific historical tasks in a mature way and are confident in using historical terms and concepts.

Shortcomings

378. There are no important shortcomings.

Sixth Form

Good features

379. Students have a very good level of knowledge and understanding of the periods they are studying.
380. They can apply the knowledge well to meet the needs of a specific task using their knowledge to balance arguments. They express an opinion concisely and knowledgeably, orally and in writing.
381. The extended writing of some students displays good elements. Students can develop historical arguments by using a variety of evidence sources, and analyse their dependability. They succeed in presenting balanced and mature arguments.

Shortcomings

382. There are no important shortcomings.

| |
|------------|
| Art |
|------------|

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Key Stage 3: | Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features |
| Key Stage 4: | Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features |
| Sixth Form: | Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features |

383. Examination results in art at GCSE in the last three years have been well above national averages for pupils attaining grades A* - C. In 2007, all pupils entered for the examination attained grades A* - C. Examination results at A level, 2005 to 2007, also show very good attainment. Over the three years, all pupils entered for art were awarded grades A – C. Over 80% of pupils entered for the exam in 2007 attained grade A. The value added data provided by the examination board shows that these results represent very good achievement by the pupils in art.

Key stage 3 and key stage 4 Outstanding features

384. Pupils use line and texture with confidence to represent views and images from the local landscape as well as from their own imagination.
385. Pupils demonstrate creative graphic skills, for example, in designs based on ancient Egyptian symbols.
386. Pupils produce analytical studies that are well annotated to explain their thought processes.

387. Pupils make relevant references to other artists in their project work.

Good features

388. Pupils have good observational drawing skills.

389. Pupils understand how symbols can be used to capture the essence of ideas.

390. Pupils provide detailed and knowledgeable written responses on their self-evaluation forms.

391. Pupils use their sketchbooks diligently to record and annotate their ideas of work in progress.

Sixth form

Outstanding features

392. Students produce excellent portrait studies in oil pastel that are further developed as paintings on canvas.

393. Students experiment confidently with mixed media to produce original outcomes.

Good features

394. Students make informed references in their sketchbooks and preliminary drawing sheets to the work of other artists, including many Welsh artists.

395. Students use computer software to merge and manipulate images as part of their design development.

396. Students can give an articulate oral explanation of their work in progress.

Shortcomings

397. There are no significant shortcomings in any of the key stages.

School's response to the inspection

It was pleasing to find that the inspection, to a large extent, agreed with the school's self-evaluation and that we had responded favourably to the recommendations of the previous inspection. Some work has been done on departmental self-evaluation over the last six years and the objectives in our whole-school performance management identify our eagerness to develop these areas further in the near future.

We were proud that the standards of achievement and the standards of teaching were good and that the unsatisfactory elements of six years ago are now seen to be good. The expertise and commitment of our teachers and support staff are acknowledged. It was pleasing to see the finding that there were outstanding elements in our care of our pupils and in our methods of dealing with serious issues such as bullying.

Most important of all, the report on the inspection emphasises those elements that makes the school good, confirming that we are achieving our aim of knowing each pupil individually and challenging them to always give of their best and, in addition, to create a happy and secure school where our pupils and students can gain in confidence and independence.

An action plan will be prepared to fully respond to the recommendations in the report. Emphasis will be placed on creating quantitative targets for groups of pupils and for individual pupils. We will avoid turning pupils to be merely numeric units and losing our sound knowledge of the personalities of our pupils.

Appropriate training will be arranged for members of the management team in order to create a transparent composite plan of all the evaluation and planning cycles of a busy school – a plan that will create accountability amongst all members of staff.

We aim to plan the outcomes of the above paragraph before the end of the current academic year so that we may be in a situation to implement the plan in detail during 2008/09 and in the years that follow.

We agree with the inspectors' recommendations to change Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy from being a good school to being a very good/outstanding school. A bilingual copy of the school's action plan in response to the inspection's recommendations will be sent to all parents. The governors' annual report to parents will report on the progress made in developing the issues in need of attention.

Appendix 1

Basic information about the school

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Name of school | Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy |
| School type | Comprehensive, community, naturally bilingual |
| Age range of pupils | 11-18 years of age |
| Address of school | Ffordd Nebo Llanrwst Conwy |
| Postcode | LL26 0SD |
| Telephone number | 01492 642800 |

| | |
|---|--|
| Headteacher | Mr Ifor Glyn Efans |
| Date of appointment | September 1992 |
| Chair of governors / Appropriate authority | Mr Huw Roberts/Conwy Education Authority |
| Reporting inspector | Dr Neil Trevor Jones |
| Dates of inspection | 28-31 January 2008 |

Appendix 2

School data and indicators

| Year group | Y7 | Y8 | Y9 | Y10 | Y11 | Y12 | Y13 | Total |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Number of pupils | 121 | 127 | 134 | 131 | 139 | 61 | 55 | 768 |

| Total number of teachers | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|
| | Full-time | Part-time | Full-time equivalent (fte) |
| Number of teachers | 48 | 9 | 52.5 |

| Staffing information | |
|--|---------|
| Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes) | 14.6 :1 |
| Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes | - |
| Average teaching group size | 19.0 |
| Overall contact ratio (percentage) | 75% |

| Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection | | | | | | | | |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------------|
| | Y7 | Y8 | Y9 | Y10 | Y11 | Y12 | Y13 | Whole school |
| Term 1 | 91.0 | 88.7 | 87.3 | 85.8 | 84.7 | 85.3 | 52.8 | 85.1 |
| Term 2 | 91.2 | 84.8 | 88.2 | 86.4 | 94.5 | 92.1 | 71.3 | 90.6 |
| Term 3 | 93.6 | 92.2 | 90.4 | 90.4 | 88.5 | 90.3 | 67.6 | 89.2 |

| | |
|--|--|
| Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals | 9% |
| Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection | 5 temporary 0 permanent 0 of ethnic minority |

Appendix 3

National Curriculum Assessment Results

End of key stage 3:

| National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results 2007 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|----------|-----|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|
| Total number of pupils in Y9: 135 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Percentage of pupils at each level | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | D | A | F | W | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | EP |
| English | Teacher assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 21 | 25 | 33 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| | | National | 0.2 | | 0.7 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 1.5 | 7.4 | 21.6 | 35.8 | 23.9 | 8.0 | 0.2 | 0.2 |
| Welsh | Teacher assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 18 | 43 | 25 | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| | | National | 0.5 | | 0.6 | 0.8 | 0.1 | 1.0 | 5.3 | 19.8 | 36.6 | 26.5 | 8.6 | 0.2 | 0.5 |
| Mathematics | Teacher assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 21 | 27 | 31 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| | | National | 0.2 | | 0.6 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 1.1 | 7.4 | 18.4 | 25.0 | 30.4 | 15.7 | 0.6 | 0.2 |
| Science | Teacher assessment | School | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 30 | 32 | 24 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| | | National | 0.2 | | 0.8 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 0.5 | 6.0 | 18.8 | 34.1 | 27.6 | 11.5 | 0.1 | 0.2 |

- 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 | 50% | In Wales | 58.2% |

Public Examination Results:

| For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ | |
|--|-----|
| Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2007 | 137 |
| Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil | 40 |

| The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2007: | School | UA | Wales |
|---|--------|----|-------|
| entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent | 88 | 86 | 87 |
| attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both | 58 | 54 | 54 |
| attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both | 86 | 85 | 86 |
| attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator) | 31 | 34 | 40 |
| entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE | 99 | 98 | 96 |
| attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent | 88 | 77 | 77 |
| attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent | 93 | 94 | 93 |
| attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent | 7 | 6 | 7 |
| attained one or more Entry level qualification only | 5 | 3 | 2 |
| attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1 | - | - | - |
| attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2 | - | - | - |

| For pupils aged 17, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs | |
|---|----|
| Number of pupils aged 17 in January 2007 | 62 |
| Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2007 | 50 |
| Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2007 | 12 |

| | School | UA | Wales |
|---|---------------|-----------|--------------|
| Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-C | 84 | 68 | 68 |
| Percentage of pupils entered who achieved 2 or more grades A-E | 98 | 93 | 94 |
| Average points score per candidate entering 2 or more subjects | 23 | 21 | 20 |
| Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Intermediate or NVQ at level 2 | - | - | - |
| Number of pupils who achieved a GNVQ Advanced or NVQ at level 3 | - | - | - |

Appendix 4

Evidence base of the inspection

Eleven inspectors spent a total of 41 inspector days in the school and observed 101 lessons. In addition, inspectors visited a cross-section of registration periods, extra-curricular activities during lunchtimes and sessions of collective worship. Discussions were held with members of the management team, heads of department and year, tutors, as well as staff members, including ancillary staff with particular responsibilities.

A cross-section of pupils work representing the more able, average and lower abilities, from Y7-Y11 and students in Y12 and Y13 was inspected. In addition, more pupils' work was seen whilst visiting classrooms, workshops and laboratories. Regular discussions were held with pupils about their work and formal interviews were undertaken with pupils and students chosen to represent their different school years, including members of the school council.

Each document presented by the school before and during the inspection was analysed.

Pre-inspection meetings were held with members of the management team, staff, the governing body and parents. Fifteen parents attended the meeting and 71 questionnaires were returned. One letter came to hand and there were 10 comments on the questionnaires received from parents.

Appendix 5

Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

| Team member | Responsibilities |
|---|--|
| Dr. Neil Trevor Jones Registered Inspector | Summary, Recommendations Responsibility for Key Question 1 Responsibility for Key Question 5 |
| Gwilym Williams | Responsibility for Key Question 4 |
| Gwynoro Jones Lay Inspector | Contributions to Key Questions 1, 3, 4 and 7 |
| Peredur W. Francis | Responsibility for Key Question 3 |
| Meiriol M. Jones | Responsibility for Key Question 7 |
| Trefor Lewis | Responsibility for Key Question 2 Welsh second language |
| Bethan Whittal | Responsibility for Key Question 6 History |
| Dr.Dafydd Charles | Information Technology |
| Gwyn Jones | Mathematics |
| Martin S Williams | Modern Foreign Languages - French |
| Ray Owen HMI | Art |
| Mr. Ifor Glyn Efans | Nominee |

Acknowledgement

The inspectors wish to thank the governors, the headteacher, staff, pupils and students of Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy for their co-operation during the inspection.

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