

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

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

**Ysgol Y Moelwyn  
Heol Wynne  
Blaenau Ffestiniog  
Gwynedd  
LL41 3DW**

**School Number: 6614031**

**Date of Inspection: 21 January 2008**

**by**

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**Date of Publication: 26 March 2008**

**Under Estyn contract number: 1201607**

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Ysgol Y Moelwyn 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 Y Moelwyn took place between 21/01/08 and 24/01/08. An independent team of inspectors, led by William Gwyn Thomas undertook the inspection. Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the National Assembly for Wales, commissioned the inspection.

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

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

<b>Grade 1</b>	good with outstanding features
<b>Grade 2</b>	good features and no important shortcomings
<b>Grade 3</b>	good features outweigh shortcomings
<b>Grade 4</b>	some good features, but shortcomings in important areas
<b>Grade 5</b>	many important shortcomings

There are three types of inspection.

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

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

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

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

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

This school received a **standard** inspection.

## Year groups and key stages

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

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

Primary phase:

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

Secondary phase:

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

The National Curriculum covers four key stages as follows:

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

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## Context

### The nature of the provider

1. Ysgol Y Moelwyn is an 11-16 mixed, naturally bilingual community school, situated in the small town of Blaenau Ffestiniog and maintained by Gwynedd Unitary Authority (UA). It services a wide catchment area. It was once a prosperous town but this prosperity has long disappeared. There are 416 pupils on roll, compared to 401 at the time of the last inspection in April 2002.
2. There is a distinct lack of employment opportunities in the area. There has also been a dramatic decline in the population of the area. Blaenau Ffestiniog portrays many features associated with social deprivation and is located in an Objective 1 region.
3. Thirteen per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, with many raised in single parent families. This is below the national average figure. Opportunities to access resources are limited to what are available within the school. Based on teacher assessment, pupils' core skills are very low compared with other areas within the county.
4. Pupils also represent the full range of ability. Ten pupils have a statement of special educational need (SEN) and a further 99 have been identified as needing some support.
5. Seventy seven per cent of the pupils come from homes where the predominant language spoken is Welsh. Twenty two per cent come from homes where the predominant language spoken is English. Ninety eight per cent of the pupils speak Welsh as a first language or to an equivalent standard. No pupils receive support teaching in English as an additional language.
6. The headteacher was appointed to the post in September 1997. The leadership team is made up of the headteacher, and deputy headteacher, both of whom were in the leadership team at the time of the last inspection.
7. Vocationally based courses at key stage (KS) 4 have been and are being developed internally and in conjunction with other providers in the area.

### The school's priorities and targets

8. The school has a three year development plan for 2006-2009. A detailed development plan for 2007/8 identifies areas for developing standards, teaching and assessment, bilingualism, the curriculum, pastoral care and guidance, management, self evaluation and the learning environment.
9. The school also sets numerical targets for success at the end of KS3 and KS4, that in 2008:
  - 66% of pupils should reach at least level 5, in teachers' assessments in all core subjects combined, at the end of KS3 (English 66%, Welsh 81%, mathematics 78%, science 78%); and
  - in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations, 74% of pupils gain at least five grades A\*-C, 100 % gain at least five grades A\*-G, and 62.5% achieve the core subject indicator (CSI).

## Summary

10. Ysgol Y Moelwyn is a very good school with many outstanding features. They relate specifically to:
- inspirational leadership of the headteacher ably assisted by the deputy headteacher;
  - strong support of the governors, staff and respect of the pupils and parents;
  - a wealth of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities involving the community;
  - the outstanding pastoral care and support; and
  - high expectations and the continuous drive for excellence.

### 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 the learners and the wider community?	1
4. How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1
5. How effective are leadership and strategic management?	1
6. How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	1
7. How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	1

11. These grades match those of the school's self-evaluation report in key questions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7. They are lower than that which the school awarded itself, in its self-evaluation report, in key question 1 but higher in key question 6 by one grade.

### How well learners achieve

12. Key stage 3 results in each of the core subjects, excluding English, have fluctuated between 2005 and 2007. During this same period, the CSI has varied annually. In 2007, the results in English, mathematics, science and the CSI were below the local and national average.
13. An outstanding aspect of the school's GCSE results is that during 2006 and 2007, 100% of pupils were entered and achieved five A\*-G grades. The school is also very successful with its early entry policy for pupils in Y10.
14. During the last three years, no pupil left school without a recognised qualification. The percentage of pupils gaining five A\*-C/G grades has been above local and national figures.
15. In 2007, girls outperformed boys in most key indicators at KS4.

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

	<b>KS3</b>	<b>KS4</b>
Welsh second language	1	1
Science	3	3
English	2	2
Geography	2	2
Art	3	3
Religious education	1	1

17. In the 59 lessons observed in these subjects, the following grades were awarded for standards of achievement:

<b>Key Stage</b>	<b>Grade 1</b>	<b>Grade 2</b>	<b>Grade 3</b>	<b>Grade 4</b>	<b>Grade 5</b>
<b>KS3</b>	18%	59%	23%	0%	0%
<b>KS4</b>	16%	60%	20%	4%	0%
<b>Total</b>	17%	59%	22%	2%	0%

18. Overall, the percentage of lessons graded 1, 2 and 3 meet the Welsh Assembly Government's (WAG's) Vision into Action 2010 target of standards in 98% of classes being graded 3 and above.
19. The percentage of lessons graded 1 and 2 are well above the WAG's target for 2007, for standards in 65% of lessons to be awarded these grades. Welsh second language and religious education contributed significantly to the percentage of lessons awarded the highest grade.
20. Welsh second language and religious education have standards which are good with outstanding features in both key stages. There has been an improvement at KS3 and KS4 in English where standards have good features and no important shortcomings. None of the six subjects inspected had a standard below a Grade 3.
21. Throughout the school the standards that pupils achieve in all their key skills are at least good with outstanding listening skills. Good progress has been made in all the key skills since the last inspection.
22. Pupils' bilingual skills are good and are clearly evident within the school community.
23. In some areas of the curriculum, pupils are not fully aware of what they have to do to improve in some areas of the curriculum.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

24. A major strength of the school is the development of pupils' personal and social skills which are outstanding. These include:
- the behaviour of pupils within the school community and on cultural visits is exemplary;
  - respect for staff, visitors and peers; and
  - the appreciation shown for the vast opportunities provided.
25. Pupils show good awareness and understanding of moral issues, beliefs and cultures. However, the quality of the tutor periods is inconsistent and this has an adverse impact on pupils' spiritual development.

26. Assemblies are effective contributors in raising these standards, especially when pupils are involved in the preparation and delivery.
27. The annual attendance rate has risen from 91.8% during the previous inspection to 92.2%. This figure is just below the WAG target of 93%.
28. The focus on preparing pupils for the work place and further education begins in KS3. The school works closely and effectively with Careers Wales and industrialists to facilitate this preparation. By the end of KS4, pupils are able to make informed choices about their futures.

**The effectiveness of teaching, training and assessment**

29. Where teaching is outstanding:
  - the quality of relationships between staff and pupils is high;
  - expectations are high; and
  - pupils are challenged.
30. The following grades were awarded for the 59 lessons observed in the six subjects inspected and the 16 lessons observed in other subjects.

Subject	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
<b>6 subjects</b>	29%	56%	13%	2%	0%
<b>Other subjects</b>	31%	50%	19%	0%	0%
<b>Total</b>	29%	55%	15%	1%	0%

31. The size and nature of this sample differs from the last inspection. However, the percentage of lessons graded 1 and 2 in this inspection (84%), for all observed lessons, is above the all-Wales figures in the latest Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training report for 2006-07 of 76%. The figure is also well above that achieved in the last inspection and above the WAG's Vision into Action 2010 target of 80%.
32. The quality of teaching in Welsh second language and religious education contributed significantly to the percentage of lessons awarded the highest grade.
33. Where teaching is good, there is appropriate pace and resources are use well. Teachers have a good grasp of their subject knowledge and thinking skills are developed well within the classroom.
34. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in some subjects, in particularly, science. Inconsistencies exist both within and between subjects.
35. Where assessment practices are consistent, rigorous and accurate, departments are able to monitor pupils' progress and pupils are clear on how well they are doing. This is a strength of the school, but there are some inconsistencies. These inconsistencies are evident within and between departments and include feedback, which is too general.

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

36. The school's curriculum offers a range of subject options to its pupils in KS4 and affords pupils the opportunities to sit examinations in some subjects in Y10. Links with the college and vocational courses run jointly with Coleg Meirion Dwyfor are extending the14-19 option menu at this key stage. The curriculum is accessible to all and provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to achieve accreditation.

37. Outstanding extra-curricular activities, which enrich pupils' personal development, are provided. Many pupils benefit from the wide range of cultural activities available, including musical activities, participating in the Urdd eisteddfodau and school excursions abroad.
38. Pupils' key skills are developed well through classroom activities such as professional demonstrations and team-building events. This is a good feature in KS4. However, their entrepreneurial skills are underdeveloped.
39. Careers education is an outstanding feature with local employers making a substantial contribution.
40. Pupils' active participation in the promotion of education for sustainable development has involved them in a wide variety of activities.
41. Links with local businesses are strong.

### **How well learners are cared for guided and supported**

42. The quality of the pastoral liaison between the school and its primary partner schools is good. This close link enables pupils to enter the secondary school with confidence and settle in quickly.
43. The links between the deputy headteacher, heads of year and form tutors is very strong. The positive approach to pupil support is applied consistently.
44. The very caring nature of the school is recognised by both pupils and parents. It is generally regarded as a strength of the school. Pupils feel that when they need support there is always someone there to help.
45. Monitoring of pupils' attendance has raised attendance levels, although they continue to be slightly below the WAG target of 93%. Good attendance is rewarded.
46. Healthy living is a central element of the school development plan (SDP) and is reflected by the variety of healthy food served in the school canteen and the many sporting clubs that are organised to keep pupils fit.
47. The quality of provision for pupils with additional learning needs is good, particularly for those pupils who are withdrawn for additional reading practice on four mornings a week. The school's setting policy in the core subjects, accompanied by other small teaching groups, provides pupils with SEN with quality support. The support given to pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties is outstanding.
48. Overall, the school's provision for equal opportunities is strong, giving all pupils as many opportunities as possible. In spite of being located in a socially deprived area, the school has succeeded in creating a truly friendly community spirit. This contributes substantially to the pupils' outstanding behaviour.
49. The school has effective procedures to deal with the few incidents of bullying.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and strategic management**

50. The headteacher is the driving force within the school and his leadership qualities are outstanding. He leads by example, provides clear direction and has a positive influence throughout the school. He and his deputy headteacher work closely as a team, and promote high standards. This senior leadership team of two is open and approachable in its management style.

51. Communication between the headteacher, middle management and staff is very effective. There is a common sense of purpose regarding the implementation of whole-school strategies. Expectations of staff and managers are clear and there is significant consistency of practice.
52. There is a high level of commitment amongst the staff, several of whom were former pupils. Most of the time, there is very good team-work.
53. The roles of individuals in senior management, core and middle management teams are clearly defined and there is a high degree of accountability. The teams have adequate time to undertake their management responsibilities.
54. There is very good practice evident with most middle managers, where departmental monitoring and target-setting procedures are rigorous. However, these practices are not applied consistently in a significant minority of departments.
55. Staff are valued and continuous staff development has a high priority within the school. All are given support and training of high quality. They are encouraged to partake in leadership roles in preparation for future management responsibilities.
56. Governors understand their roles clearly and are closely involved in the strategic management of the school. They are linked to departments and undertake classroom observations. They are extensively involved in the development of the school as a community facility. They make an outstanding contribution to the success of Ysgol Y Moelwyn.

#### **How well leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards**

57. The school's self-evaluation processes are well embedded in the work of all staff. These procedures were developed as part of the Investors in People Award (IiP) which the school has been awarded on several occasions. The process focused staff's attention on management issues.
58. The school's self-evaluation report is a feature of a continuous on-going, self-evaluation process. The process involves extensive consultation of pupils, staff, parents and partners of the school. Contributions to the SDPs are made by all teams within the school. This ensures that the school and departmental plans are interdependent.
59. Planning for improvement is comprehensive and has resulted in measurable improvement in many areas.

#### **The efficiency of leaders and managers in using resources**

60. The school is well staffed. It employs suitably-qualified and experienced staff, some of whom teach outside their main specialist areas. Standards are maintained by those who teach outside their specialist areas through the outstanding support they receive.
61. The school provides its pupils with an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities through the involvement of many staff, including a team of fully trained classroom assistants.
62. Pupils' standards in information and communications technology (ICT) have been substantially enhanced by the considerable investment in computers

which are regularly updated. Most classrooms have interactive white-boards to support teaching and learning.

63. The school manages its budget allocation effectively, through the headteacher and finance officer. The governing body monitors spending appropriately.
64. Overall, the school achieves outstanding value for money.

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

65. With regard to the key issues from the previous inspection, the school has made good progress in:
- maintaining and raising standards in some subjects where they were satisfactory;
  - raising standards in key skills across the curriculum;
  - complying with the statutory requirements for the act of daily collective worship for every pupil; and
  - addressing the previously identified health and safety issues.

## **Recommendations**

In order to achieve its objectives, the school should focus on the following priorities:

- \*R1. Raise standards in science and art in all key stages;
- \*R2. Promote the good and outstanding features to all departments by sharing best practice.
- R3. Raise pupils' expectations by developing a more consistent process of target-setting procedures to ensure that:
- pupils have an input to their own targets; and
  - pupils are fully aware of what is required to improve their performance.
- \*R4. Strengthen the current provision within the Learning Core in the 14-19 Learning Pathways agenda. Entrepreneurial skills require further development.

*\* The SDP addresses several of these recommendations.*

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

## **Standards**

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

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

66. The school awarded itself a Grade 1 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is one grade lower because there are inconsistencies in:
- standards achieved in lessons observed;

- trends in performance; and
- results compared with benchmarking figures.

### KS3 and KS4

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

67. The following grades were awarded for standards of achievement at KS3 and KS4 in the 59 lessons observed in the six subjects inspected:

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
<b>KS3</b>	18%	59%	24%	0%	0%
<b>KS4</b>	16%	60%	20%	4%	0%
<b>KS3+KS4</b>	17%	59%	22%	2%	0%

68. In 76% of the lessons, pupils achieve standards that have good features and no important shortcomings. In 98% of lessons, good features outweigh shortcomings. The majority of the outstanding work was observed in Welsh second language and religious education. Standards in science have shortcomings in important areas.
69. Standards are above the 2007 WAG target. The school grades are above the required target that 65% of lessons are to be grade one or two. They are also above the grades awarded for standards in lessons for grades one and two in all secondary schools inspected in 2006-2007. They equal the national 2010 Vision into Action target of 98% for standards to be graded one, two or three.
70. In the six subjects inspected, standards in Welsh second language and religious education at KS3 and KS4 are good with outstanding features. They are good with no important shortcomings in English and geography in KS3 and KS4. Good features outweigh shortcomings in science and art in KS3 and KS4. There were good features, but shortcomings in important areas in standards in one lesson in science.
71. Results in teacher assessments at the end of KS3 have varied considerably over the last three years. Overall, attainment in 2007 was below the average for similar schools where between 15% and 20% of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals. With the exception of Welsh first language, the school was placed in the bottom 50%.
72. Teacher assessments in English, mathematics and science and the three core subjects combined were below local authority and national averages. Between 2005 and 2007 overall results had fluctuated, but English results had shown a continuous improvement.
73. Compared with the previous inspection's KS3 results, the 2007 figures highlighted that the mathematics and CSI results were slightly above, English well above and Welsh significantly above. Science was below the previous inspection figures.
74. At KS4, in 2007, the percentage of pupils achieving five A\*-C grades and five A\*-G grades are above local authority and national averages. When compared with similar school in Wales, the percentage of pupils in the above two categories is in the top 25% of schools with similar free school meal entitlement. All pupils left school with five A\*-G qualifications. This is an outstanding

achievement. In 2007, the school's CSI result, when compared with similar schools in Wales, is in the top 50%.

75. Between 2005 and 2007 the percentage of pupils achieving a grade C or above in the core subjects varied. The greatest improved consistency was in English.
76. Between 2005 and 2007, girls outperformed boys in all the core subjects and the CSI. During this period, the performance of girls had improved significantly in English. However, in 2006 boys outperformed girls in mathematics.
77. In KS3 and KS4, pupils of all abilities achieve irrespective of their backgrounds. This is strength of the school. However, many pupils do not achieve their full potential in a minority of subjects they study by the end of KS4.
78. Overall, pupils' standards in key skills have improved since the previous inspection with standards in all skills having at least good features and no important shortcomings.
79. Pupils' speaking skills in Welsh first language and English have improved and now have good features and no important shortcomings. Their bilingual skills are strong as is evidenced by their use of both languages confidently within the classroom and around the school.
80. Pupils' listening skills are outstanding. They listen to their teachers and to one another carefully. They show good recall of previous work and use subject-specific terminology appropriately.
81. Reading and writing skills in Welsh first language and English have good features and no important shortcomings. Those with reading difficulties have effective support. As a consequence, pupils' reading ages have increased. Written work is good, relative to ability. This also applies to problem-solving skills and working with others.
82. At both key stages, the standards that pupils achieve in all their key skills, including numeracy skills, improving one's own learning and problem solving are good with no important shortcomings.
83. Standards in ICT throughout all the key stages have improved as a consequence of the enhanced facilities and the co-ordination of the skill across the curriculum. Pupils have access to these ICT resources in after-school homework-clubs on four evenings a week. This has facilitated pupils to use the ICT resources effectively. In KS4, all pupils follow a short or full course in ICT.
84. The school does not currently accredit the good work undertaken in key skills in KS3 or KS4.
85. Standards have improved because pupils:
  - listen attentively;
  - speak confidently and provide extended answers that demonstrate knowledge and understanding of their work;
  - write accurately and present their work well; and
  - have a desire to succeed.

### **Their progress in learning**

86. The overall ability of the pupils entering the school varies from year to year. Based on prior attainment and ability on entry to the school, pupils in KS3 make

good progress but this varies from subject to subject. Setting arrangements in the core subjects ensure that pupils progress in accordance with their ability. With few exceptions, girls attain better than boys. The difference between their levels of attainment is greatest in English. However, boys' progress in science is better.

87. Compared with their performance in KS2, pupils did not achieve as well as was expected at the end of KS3 in 2007. Pupils underachieved in science, mathematics and in the CSI.
88. Underachievement by some pupils was also evident in KS4 science, English and other GCSE subjects.
89. Pupil progress from KS3 to KS4 is good, but the progress is inconsistent. The extent to which pupils make progress varies between subjects and between the two key stages.
90. A hundred per cent of the cohort was entered for one or more entry level, GCSE short course, GCSE or equivalent in 2006 and 2007. No pupil left the school without a recognised qualification during these two years and 100% achieved five grades A\*-G in their GCSE examinations.
91. The school is successful in encouraging every aptitude, supporting identified needs and providing courses in which pupils of differing abilities and temperament achieve. The school's MEGA (Menter Ehangu Gorwelion Addysg) centre succeeds in highly motivating pupils who are disaffected.
92. Pupils acquire new knowledge and skills, but the process of assessing how well they have achieved is good, but variable. Some pupils are not fully aware of what they have to do to improve. There is inconsistency across the curriculum in informing and advising pupils of how they need to improve. Written and oral feedback is variable in quality. In the books examined, the advice given varied from good features outweighing shortcomings to good with outstanding features. Targets for improvement are not given consistently and neither are they focused. They are not always subject-specific.
93. The introduction of vocational courses in KS4 has raised the degree of appropriate challenge for lower and middle ability pupils to achieve their potential. Able pupils are successful in Y10 at GCSE examinations in French, religious education and information technology.
94. In the majority of classes and subjects, pupils are engaged in independent learning. They are also well supported in the homework clubs after school where teaching and support staff encourage all pupils to succeed. Pupils with additional learning needs achieve standards that are matched to their ability or better when they are supported in mainstream classes effectively.
95. The majority of pupils' key skills are developing to a good standard. These are contributing to preparing them for the expectations of life long learning.

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

96. There are several outstanding features associated with the school's development of its pupils' personal, social and learning skills.
97. Pupils work exceptionally well in lessons, both individually and collaboratively. They show interest and enthusiasm in their work. There is a very positive

atmosphere in lessons and around the school. Most pupils demonstrate a high level of maturity and use these personal skills effectively.

98. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding, both within the classroom and around the school. They show respect and behave responsibly towards one another, to members of staff and to visitors. They are considerate, courteous and proud to be members of the school. They wear their uniforms with pride and this contributes to the high standards of behaviour exhibited by the pupils. The atmosphere within the school community is very calm and orderly. This contributes positively to pupils' learning.
99. The school is a caring and inclusive community from where very few pupils have been temporarily excluded. During the last academic year, no pupil was permanently excluded.
100. The school succeeds in providing members of its community with positive opportunities.
101. The attendance level for 2006-2007 was 92.2%. However, this is slightly below the WAG target of 93%. The majority of pupils is punctual to lessons. During the inspection, pupils' attendance was good.
102. Pupils make outstanding progress in their moral development and cultural development. Good progress is made in their spiritual development. The contribution of assemblies, the religious education periods and the PSE programmes contribute to moral and spiritual development. However, the tutorial periods are not as effective.
103. Pupils demonstrate a sound awareness of equal opportunities issues and show great respect for diversity, both within school and in society. There are outstanding links with the community and local businesses. The partnerships with the school are continuously being developed and strengthened. Through these, and values promoted by the school, pupils are prepared well for participation in the workplace and 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

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

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

##### KS3 and KS4

105. In the 59 lessons observed in the six subjects, the grades awarded to teaching in KS3 and KS4 were:

Quality of teaching	Grade1	Grade2	Grade3	Grade4	Grade5
Subjects inspected	29%	56%	14%	2%	0

106. The overall grades for the quality of teaching in the 75 lessons observed in KS3 and KS4 were:

Quality of teaching	Grade1	Grade2	Grade3	Grade4	Grade5
All lessons	29%	55%	15%	1%	0

107. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. There is no significant difference between the standards of teaching in the six subjects inspected and the quality of teaching throughout the school. In the six subjects, there are good and outstanding features in the quality of teaching in the vast majority of lessons in Welsh second language and religious education. In art, geography and English, there are good features and no important shortcomings in the quality of teaching. In science, the good features outweigh the shortcomings in the quality of teaching.
108. In 85% of lessons observed in the six subjects, there are good features and no important shortcomings in the teaching. This is significantly higher than the figure for inspections in Wales in 2006-07 where 76% of lessons were judged to be either Grade 1 or 2. The school has exceeded the secondary 'Vision in Action' target for 2010, that the quality of teaching should be Grade 2 or better in 80% of classes.
109. An outstanding feature of the teaching is the very good working relationship between the teachers and the pupils. This relationship, together with the respect and equal opportunities each pupil receives, nurture healthy attitudes towards learning, promote the pupils' motivation to persevere in class and to encourage high standards of behaviour in lessons.
110. Outstanding features of the teaching include:
- very high expectations in respect of standards of work that motivate and challenge individual pupils;
  - extensive opportunities to develop pupils' thinking and learning skills;
  - use of a variety of teaching and learning techniques that encourage pupils to work industriously and to make considerable progress; and
  - work linked very well to pupils' interests and experiences.
111. Teachers meet pupils' linguistic needs outstandingly. Through activities such as work experience periods, guest speakers and visits, the school provides very good opportunities for pupils to use and relate their bilingual skills within a range of everyday situations. Bilingualism is developed through introducing and using subject-specific terminology in both languages, nurturing the skill of purposeful concurrent use of language together with providing bilingual units in the humanities. There is extremely effective provision to maintain the linguistic needs of the late comers and integrate them to successfully transfer to the mother tongue.
112. Across all lessons, many good features of the teaching include:
- use of a good range of activities and resources, including some use of the interactive whiteboards, which maintains pupils' interest;
  - good questioning techniques to confirm previous knowledge and to support the learning;
  - appropriate pace and timing;
  - ensure pupils' active participation in order to develop their thinking and practical skills;
  - purposeful use of group and pair work to encourage pupils to discuss; and
  - sound subject knowledge.

113. These lessons are carefully planned and lesson objectives are shared, used and reviewed at the end.
114. In a few lessons, the shortcomings seen include:
- over-long introductions by teachers and a lack of pace in the work;
  - a lack of variety and sufficient challenge in the activities; and
  - restricted questioning which limits the thinking process.
115. A very good number of teachers give generously of their time to offer additional support in revision sessions which reinforce the pupils' learning.
116. Pupils with ALN are taught well and the LSAs offer effective support to individuals and groups of pupils.

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

117. All the assessment and reporting requirements on the NC subjects are met and the teaching meets the requirements of the examination boards.
118. The school has a clear and comprehensive assessment policy which offers sound guidance on the implementation of the assessment system in order to improve pupils' motivation and learning. Through the assessment for learning policy, good practice is recognised and promoted.
119. The assessment procedures across the school for monitoring pupils' progress against target grades are one of the school's strengths. There is a close link between the senior management team (SMT), subject departments, heads of year and class tutors in the use made of assessment data, including standards of behaviour, as a tool to promote and raise standards. Additional effective support is provided to target groups through mentoring, interviews, workshops and working with parents.
120. In a number of subjects the assessment process is consistent, rigorous and accurate. In these subjects, marking of pupils' work is diagnostics with clear comments and targets that lead the individual to make good progress. In the best examples, good use is made of assessment practices for learning by sharing success criteria with the pupils. This increases their understanding of the expectations.
121. Where there are inconsistencies within and between departments in the assessment practices, the shortcomings include:
- inconsistent standards and methods of assessment with the quality of the feedback too general to show the pupils clearly how to improve their work;
  - inconsistency in the use of 'assessment for learning' as a tool to improve standards; and
  - lack of use of assessment data to recognise trends in order to feedback effectively to the teaching, the marking and the assessment.
122. Although there are good examples of pupils assessing their own work, this good practice is not consistently strong across the school. In some cases, it is superficial and, as a result, not a means of improving standards of achievement.
123. Annual and interim reports to parents provide good information on their child's academic and personal development. They give a clear picture of pupils'

progress in each subject based on attainment grades, target grades, homework and effort. Where the reporting is of a good quality, the comments are judgemental and give definite recommendations on how to try and ensure improvement. Comments do not always give pupils specific targets in order to improve their work.

124. Pupils respond constantly to the reports through giving comments on their progress, their behaviour, their contribution to school life, in addition to recording their personal and subject targets in the Record of Achievement, this is good practice. However, the quality and preciseness of these targets is inconsistent. Parents may contribute to the reports through responding in writing. Annual parents' evenings are held and parents appreciate the two parents' evenings for Y9 and KS4.

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

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

125. This grade matches the school's self evaluation grade. The outstanding features are the:

- well organised curriculum which meets the needs of all pupils at all key stages, giving them opportunities to gain accreditation;
- opportunities available for pupils to develop their skills outside normal lesson times;
- high priority given to pupils' moral, social and cultural development;
- comprehensive careers education programme;
- well developed partnerships with outside providers and the community;
- embedded development of bilingual education in all aspects of the school;
- understanding of the culture of Wales; and
- experiences of overcoming social disadvantage and stereotyping.

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

126. The school delivers a series of well planned, accessible and structured programmes at all key stages that allow pupils to achieve their academic and social potential. The school is very successful with all pupils in this objective and pupils are encouraged to make improvements in their academic performance each year. Their confidence develops as they progress through the school from Y7 to Y11. All pupils have the opportunity to gain appropriate qualifications as was evidenced in the examination results in the last two years. With few exceptions, courses lead to external accreditation at an appropriate level.

127. The school curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for all pupils. It is broad, balanced and caters well for their needs. No pupils are disapplied from the national curriculum (NC) and the strategies involved for assisting pupils with academic problems are very effective. The work covered by the pupils is continuous and progressive. The time given to art at KS3 is sufficient but is unevenly distributed across the key stage. This has an adverse effect on standards.

128. The school has close relationships with the feeder primary schools which are supported by their headteachers and their links with the pastoral and SEN aspects are particularly strong. Curriculum links occur too.
129. At KS4, the range of subject options is very good and this is further increased by the off-site provision at Coleg Meiron Dwyfor. Pupils who attend this college course miss two school lessons per week. This does not affect standards in other subjects. The cycling course extends the practical and curricular experiences for some pupils. Virtually all the courses studied, lead to external accreditation which further enhances opportunities for pupils.
130. The school has extensive and well planned schemes of work to cover basic and key skills which are integrated into the schemes of work of departments. This is good practice. Every opportunity is taken to develop these skills across the curriculum and these provide excellent practice for pupils.
131. The quality and opportunities for out-of-school activities is outstanding and is a strength of the school. There is extensive provision in physical education, music and other curricular areas and the school staff give generously of their time to support these activities. Such experiences greatly assist in raising pupils' standards and make worth-while contributions to their personal and social development. The homework-club organised after school is much appreciated by pupils. The school makes special arrangements regarding home-to-school transport to enable all pupils to benefit from this provision. Curricular visits are arranged to support individual subjects, including religious education. Pupils visit churches, Mosques and Synagogues. The school has strong links with the Urdd which help pupils to understand the culture of Wales. Pupils also contribute to the publication "Bawd" commenting on their enjoyment of the Welsh books they have read and giving a brief account of their content. In addition, pupils contribute extensively to activities in the community.
132. The school has high quality work to promote pupils' personal development by placing a very strong emphasis on their, moral, social and cultural development. The collective worship provided for each key stage is very effective and involves pupil participation. Pupils listen intently, and understand the clear messages being given. In tutorials, opportunities exist for discussions and during the inspection week, matters relating to respect for others and bullying were considered. The standard of work done in the tutorial groups was inconsistent.
133. The high standards of behaviour reflect the aims of the school and the moral development of pupils is equally strong. Pupils are provided with opportunities to study other cultures in a variety of subjects including religious education and history and nearly all aspects reflect a strong Welsh culture in the school. Elements of these permeate all lessons.
134. The balanced and broadly based curriculum meets all course and legal requirements. The PSE programme which includes health, careers and work related education is strong in the school. It is well planned and includes excellent opportunities for the pupils in all years. The ethos and organisation of the school contribute to this. Careers education is an outstanding feature and there is good support given by Careers Wales. Local employers contribute appropriately.

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

135. Pupils in Y10 have work experience opportunities which reflect their probable career interest. Pupils are monitored by the school during this time and pupils keep a diary of their experiences. They are well briefed on what is expected of them. The school has developed links with many employers and businesses which contribute to the careers' programme and the curriculum. Some of these links are provided by the governors who have industrial back-grounds. Opportunities for staff development in industry have been taken by a few staff.
136. The quality of provision in both English and Welsh is very good. Nearly all the pupils follow their courses through the medium of Welsh. The school succeeds in developing bilingualism amongst its pupils. These skills develop progressively as the pupils move through the school. The requirements of the *Cwricwlwm Cymreig* are fully met and opportunities exist to increase pupils' awareness of culture, the language and the history of Wales. This is reflected in the very high number of pupils who sit their external examination in Welsh as a first language. Good bridging work is done with various institutions.
137. The school successfully promotes equality of access for all. This is achieved through the provision of five teaching sets for the core subjects in every year. The 'MEGA' unit established in the school, works well in integrating school phobic and others who have learning/behavioural difficulties in the school. This is a valuable development. The school takes all steps to avoid social disadvantage and stereotyping.
138. Pupils are aware of sustainable development and global citizenship issues. There is a paper recycling bin in every classroom and the school recycles cardboard and plastic. There are automatic taps situated in the school to save water.
139. Pupils in KS4 are involved in some entrepreneurial activities. However, these skills are underdeveloped in the school as a whole.
140. A considerable amount is done to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and this is underpinned in tutorials and PSE lessons. The school is discussing extending the availability of vocational subjects in the 14–19 Learning Pathways' curriculum. The good links with Coleg Meirion Dwyfor enable further courses to be considered, including vocational options, some through video conferencing, as well as the Skills Centre, proposed at a nearby village. The school is making very good progress in this area.

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

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

141. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade. The outstanding features are the:
- very effectively planned and managed care arrangements;
  - quality of advice and guidance provided to pupils regarding their choice of courses;
  - positive and caring relationship between pupils and teachers; and

- exceptional range of external agencies that work in close partnership with the school.

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

142. Care arrangements are very effectively planned and managed. Clear lines of communication and responsibility extend from the form tutor to the head of year and ultimately to the deputy headteacher responsible for care and support. Regular meetings of the various teams ensure a consistency of approach throughout the school.
143. The quality of advice and guidance provided to pupils about their choice of courses at both KS4 and post-16 is particularly effective. The school consults pupils and their parents to ensure that an appropriate range of courses is available at KS4. Careers Wales provides independent and up-to-date advice on appropriate choices. Additional support is provided by a series of well-planned careers education sessions in Y9.
144. The positive and caring relationship between pupils and teachers is a notable strength of the school. There is sufficient time available during the morning tutorial periods to enable tutors to get to know their pupils well. The resulting rapport means that tutors can closely monitor individual pupils in an atmosphere of trust. They intervene readily when issues of behaviour, punctuality or performance arise.
145. Further personal support is provided by a well-planned and organised PSE programme. This occurs not only during tutorial time but also when the timetable is suspended. This happens regularly and allows whole days to be devoted to a specific topic or theme. Good quality careers education is a priority and it forms part of the PSE curriculum throughout the school. Support is provided through the excellent relationship with Careers Wales and local businesses. The PSE programme fully meets the requirements of the CEG and PSE frameworks.
146. There are regular meetings with a very wide range of external agencies which provide specialised support for pupils.
147. The health, safety and well being of pupils are well managed. There are adequate provisions for first aid. The school works closely with the UA to encourage healthy eating.
148. Healthy living is a central element of the SDP and is reflected by the variety of healthy food served in the school canteen and the many sporting clubs that are organised to keep pupils fit.
149. There is a strong working partnership with parents and carers. They are provided with numerous opportunities to visit and contact the school and they respond well to these opportunities.
150. The school has good curriculum and social links with partner primary schools in the area. There is a well-organised induction day and as a result pupils settle quickly and happily into their new school.
151. The school is working actively to improve attendance and pupils with good records are recognised and rewarded. Parents and carers are contacted on the first day of absence. Heads of Year monitor attendance statistics in order to identify patterns of absence. The EWO (Education Welfare Officer) is based at

the school. This officer, who is partly funded by the school investigates, questions and supports pupils whose attendance records are inadequate.

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

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

153. Twenty four per cent of pupils are currently on the special needs register, 10 of whom have a statement of special needs.
154. In relation to the identification and assessment of SEN pupils, the school works closely with the feeder schools and gathers useful information on pupils who require extra support. The SEN co-ordinator (SENCO) attends pupils' reviews before they begin at the school. This is followed by frequent testing in reading and spelling, commencing early in Y7. Each subject teacher and head of year reports regularly, in detail, on pupils in order to review and monitor their progress. This is an effective process.
155. Parents make an important contribution to the reviews of their child's provision and progress. The school encourages their close involvement from Y6 when parents are encouraged to visit the school.
156. The school works closely with outside agencies as required. Statements of special educational needs are reviewed efficiently and the school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice.
157. Individual education plans and behaviour plans are detailed and targets are precise.
158. Pupils with special educational needs make steady, often good, progress. They have equal access to GCSE courses and examinations.
159. The school provides extra reading practice four mornings a week for designated pupils. This is successful in raising pupils' confidence and skills.
160. The designated governor for SEN provides an effective link between the school and the governing body.
161. Targets identified on the individual education plans are collated into confidential and effective booklets for the use of staff in their planning and provision for pupils with special needs. Departments use this information very constructively to meet pupils' needs.
162. The individual plans for pupils can be accessed electronically by all staff.
163. The school's policy on setting in the core subjects, and teaching in very small classes is very effective in giving good quality support to pupils with special educational and behavioural needs.
164. Movement between sets is flexible and caters sensitively for the strengths and needs of pupils. Consequently pupils with special needs are fully integrated with mainstream pupils.
165. The school's response to supporting pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties is an outstanding feature. Parents are brought in to consult on the difficulties promptly and a behaviour contract is agreed. The SENCO works closely with outside specialists and distributes clear guidance to all teachers concerned on how to provide for the pupil. Small teaching groups support

individual provision. The learning support assistants (LSAs) make an invaluable contribution to reducing any potential disruption to other pupils. Some pupils are directed to other activities and become involved with the MEGA group which includes a relevant out of school programme.

166. Pupils with additional educational needs are well cared for in a supportive and respectful learning environment.

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

167. This section contains a number of outstanding aspects:

- the support and guidance offered to learners which gives consideration to their social, educational, ethnic or linguistic background;
- the way in which gender equality is promoted and stereotyping challenged;
- there are effective measures to eliminate oppressive behaviour; and
- the school ensures that pupils recognise and respect diversity in people, backgrounds, faiths, heritage, societies and countries.

168. There is great emphasis within the school on recognising and responding to the social, linguistic, ethnic or educational needs of the individual. This is done through pastoral support, activities and the commitment of staff out of school hours and the strong links that exist with a number of local agencies.

169. The contribution of a number of staff and organisations outside the school is remarkable and includes activities such as sporting clubs, Venture Scheme homework, the MEGA scheme and the '*Yn Ein Blaenau*' and Communities First initiatives. The school's exceptional work has been recognised through the School Sports for All, British Award and the Community Schools in North Wales Major Award.

170. Non Welsh speaking pupils who move into the area are effectively integrated into the school.

171. There is an equal opportunities policy in place which is promoted in performing and sporting opportunities, academic and curricular aspects, mentor activities and the school council. The school also promotes good race relations. Pupils are full of praise for the efforts of staff in respect of the above matters.

172. The school succeeds in ensuring a friendly and community atmosphere within and does exceptional work in responding to problems that arise from being located in a very disadvantaged area. Everyone is constantly reminded of how vital it is to respond pleasantly and respectfully to each pupil and adult. Successful arrangements exist with the North Wales Police and the local police officer for schools to ensure that there is no continuation of any oppressive behaviour within and outside the school.

173. The school buildings make it difficult to provide full access for pupils with certain types of disabilities. However, the school has good access facilities. There is an appropriate Disability Equality Plan and an accessibility strategy.

174. One of the outstanding features of the school is the way it recognises and respects diversity. Over and above the statements on equal opportunities and racial equality, aspects of the curriculum are used very well to learn about

elements of multi-culturalism and the variety of religions in the world. The school also pays due attention to varying the learning methods according to individual needs. Through discussion, it is obvious that the pupils are knowledgeable of the differences that exist and are prepared to celebrate these in the school.

## **Leadership and management**

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

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

175. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade. The outstanding features are:

- inspirational leadership of the headteacher;
- strategic planning and evaluation of performance by senior management and governors;
- the complementary roles of the headteacher and deputy headteacher;
- shared values amongst all those associated with the school;
- an open and approachable management style of the senior managers; and
- the continuous professional development of teaching and support staff.

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

176. The aims and expectations of the school are made clear to all governors, staff, pupils and visitors. All associated with the school are committed to these aims.

177. The school has developed through the excellent leadership of the headteacher. He leads with vision, giving clear strategic direction and is very influential in promoting school community values, by example. He has moved the school forward and taken the staff and school community with him.

178. He is highly respected by his staff, governors and the wider community. He is further developing the school's existing strengths by introducing new initiatives and structures to assist the future development of the school, in particular, strengthening the school's focus on the community.

179. The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and both provide strong leadership. They maintain high standards, by regular presence around the school. They are strongly supported by heads of year that also have a high presence around the school.

180. Both the headteacher and deputy headteacher are linked to a cluster of departments and these management links are effective. Monitoring is rigorous, but supportive. Staff and departmental meetings are held regularly with excellent levels of communication to the senior staff. Management meetings are held on a formal and informal basis with an agenda to evaluate progress and plan for improvement.

181. Middle-managers understand their roles clearly and most undertake these roles to good effect. Middle-managers and heads of year of high quality are committed to raising standards by monitoring work on a regular basis. The

quality of leadership in a significant minority of departments is below the high standards of the majority.

182. The school actively promotes equality of opportunity for all. Everyone in the school is treated with respect and has a contribution which is valued. There are high levels of empowerment and trust which enhance the feeling of ownership and belonging.
183. The school ensures the professional development of teaching, administrative and technical staff according to individual and school needs. Staffs, other than managers are encouraged to chair and lead strategic groups in developing policy. Potential managers are afforded opportunities to shadow middle and senior managers.
184. The school has successfully developed several national priorities. There are very good features, particularly in the development of, healthy schools' initiative and lifestyles, social inclusion, and sustainable development. The school is currently working closely with the authority's 14-19 Learning Pathways' co-ordinator to enhance the vocational provision in KS4, and even closer with the community to enhance further the existing outstanding opportunities for an area which is socially deprived.
185. The school has a firmly established system of performance management. Targets are set for each individual teacher's professional development and a target for whole-school development.
186. The programme for the induction of newly-qualified teachers, and teachers new to the school is very well organised and managed. Initial teacher training (ITT) student teachers also receive very good support. Two members of staff have achieved the National Professional Qualification for Headteachers. They use aspects of this qualification to improve their management strategies.

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

187. The governing body includes members who have supported the school over a number of years, and members recently appointed. Their individual expertise is used very effectively, not only in the work of the governing body but also in enhancing the curricular and community dimension of the school. They make an outstanding contribution to the leadership of the school.
188. The governors clearly understand their roles and act as critical friends in a highly effective manner. They possess an excellent knowledge of the running of the school. They are well informed on all aspects of school performance and receive regular reports from school managers.
189. The chair of governors and chairs of the sub-committees are in regular discussion with the headteacher and ensure that these committees work productively for the benefit of the school.
190. They hold themselves accountable for the effectiveness, appropriateness for purpose and value for money of all procedures and practices.
191. Governors analyse their own performance and training needs with a view to continuing improvement. Two governors have improved their knowledge of their responsibilities and received the national governors' certificate.

192. They are fully involved in the strategic management of the school. The quality of their strategic management and involvement in the evaluation processes are outstanding features.
193. A member of the governing body links directly with the SEN department. The designated governor is very supportive of the work of the learning support department.
194. Links to subject departments are well established and governors act as critical friends. All governors are linked either to departments or an aspect of school activities. They undertake lesson observations in a supportive manner.
195. All regulatory requirements are met.

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

**Grade 1: Good with outstanding features**

196. The school awarded itself a Grade 2 in its self-evaluation report. The grade awarded by the inspection team is one grade higher. Although there is an inconsistency of self-evaluation in one department, the outstanding features identified substantially outweigh this inconsistency.
197. The outstanding features are the:
  - well embedded culture of self-evaluation in all aspects of the school's work;
  - clear guidelines, policies and systems exist to assist staff with departmental self-evaluation;
  - detailed and rigorous self-evaluation reports at whole school and departmental level;
  - very effective and supportive links between the headteacher, deputy headteacher and their linked departments;
  - positive impact on standards and the quality of teaching within the school;
  - well established cycle of lesson observations and scrutiny of pupil work;
  - rigorous analysis of examination performance using a range of data linked to target setting;
  - thorough knowledge of the school by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors; and
  - quality links between department development plans and the whole-school development plan.

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

198. The headteacher, deputy and governors are very well informed about all aspects of the school's performance. They have a clear understanding of their roles and work very effectively to fulfil them. Overall, the procedures for self-evaluation are outstanding in the way in which they are applied rigorously across the school.
199. The school's self-evaluation report is an extremely detailed and thorough overview of the school's performance against the seven key questions. All members of staff contribute to and are fully involved in the monitoring and

review of their work. Systems of self-evaluation are comprehensive and extremely robust.

200. The self-evaluation policy and monitoring procedures have been well established over a number of years. There is an annual cycle of lesson observations and scrutiny of pupil work at both whole school level by the headteacher and deputy headteacher and within departments.
201. Departments write their own detailed self-evaluation reports based on the seven key questions of the Common Inspection Framework and they grade key questions 1 and 2 for both KS3 and KS4 and then an overall grade. A rigorous analysis of examination results, drawing on available data, informs the departmental self-evaluation process. Minutes of departmental and middle-manager meetings are suitably focussed on the work of pupils and identifying underachievement.
202. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well together to support middle-managers and the line-management structure is rigorous, yet supportive and ensures a two way flow of information.
203. Governors have very good knowledge and understanding of the school and its performance. They are linked to departments and contribute actively to the work of the school. Pupil and parental voice in self-evaluation arrangements are also good and the school council works closely with the deputy headteacher.

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

204. The school's development plan is a three year document which is reviewed annually. The links between whole school and departmental development plans are impressive and departmental plans address the progress made against the previous year's plan and whole school priorities for the coming year. They also address the department's individual needs. All these are fully costed and capitation is carefully linked to these priorities for improvement.
205. The school sets itself challenging targets at both whole school and individual pupil level. These ensure that year on year the actions taken bring about improvements resulting in clearly measurable gains particularly in the quality of teaching identified in this report. Progress since the last inspection has been good.
206. The school has made progress in raising standards in the majority of subjects identified as satisfactory in the previous report and good progress in:
  - promoting pupils' key skills across the school;
  - developing further teaching practices to develop pupils as independent learners;
  - planning for using both languages across the curriculum;
  - ensuring statutory requirements for the act of daily collective worship are met; and
  - addressing health and safety issues identified in the previous report.

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

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

207. This grade matches the school's self-evaluation grade. The outstanding features are the:

- management and deployment of staff to deliver the curricular programme;
- resources for teaching and learning;
- contribution of the trained learning support assistants to all aspects of school activities;
- planning, monitoring and control of the school's budget allocation; and
- a comprehensive programme of continued professional development of staff.

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

208. The management and deployment of staff demonstrates a number of outstanding features.

209. Staff delivering lessons outside their subject specialism receive outstanding support. This ensures appropriate standards are maintained and departmental policy objectives are met.

210. A team of fully trained classroom support staff offers an outstanding contribution to a wide range of school programmes both within and outside the classroom.

211. The school is well staffed with suitably qualified and experienced teachers to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. The staffing complement is higher than the authority's allocation based on formula giving a very favourable pupil/teacher ratio of 13.9:1.

212. There is a very good balance between experienced teachers and those who entered the teaching profession within the last seven years.

213. The deployment of technical staff is appropriate and they contribute fully to supporting curriculum and administrative delivery.

214. Resources for teaching and learning are outstanding in terms of books and equipment in most departments. This has been achieved by the:

- considerable investment in ICT resulting in 155 machines on the network;
- a very favourable pupil/computer ratio of 3.6:1;
- provision of 24 interactive whiteboards to support teaching and learning;
- purchase of specialist equipment for pupils with additional learning needs; and
- use of specialist facilities within and outside the community.

215. In general, the school provides a very positive and appropriate environment for teaching and learning with an ongoing programme of refurbishment and refurnishing of classrooms.

216. The school library has been recently redesigned and refurbished to establish a resource centre/lecture theatre. The facility is well managed by a part-time library assistant. The centre and the adjacent ICT suite provide very good after school support for all pupils in the well organized homework club.

217. However, the opportunities for pupils to borrow books outside the appropriate lessons are limited to one morning and four evenings a week. The investment in stocking the centre with books is being reduced although the authority's library service continues to exchange books on a termly basis. The Welsh department has established its own library facility.
218. The outstanding display of pupils' work in most classrooms and corridors projects a very positive and stimulating environment for teaching and pupil learning.
219. The physical education facilities are augmented by a good quality all weather surface and a newly installed fitness suite.
220. The accommodation has many other good features. This includes:
- all staff having individual teaching bases;
  - almost all classrooms being equipped with an interactive whiteboard;
  - the size and availability of classrooms meeting the requirements in terms of pupil numbers; and
  - the refurbishment and refurnishing of the kitchen and dining areas.
221. However, the school is not an identified unitary authority establishment to receive pupils with physical disabilities. It does not provide sufficient access for physically disabled pupils.
222. The school manages its own cleaning and site maintenance very efficiently and effectively. The caretaker and other relevant staff keep the school campus in excellent order.

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

223. The management of the school's resources demonstrates a number of outstanding features. These include the:
- allocated budget management on a daily basis by the headteacher and the finance officers;
  - planning of resource spending for immediate and future priorities, its review, monitoring and implementation;
  - careful and detailed planning between the use of resources and the school's identified areas for development;
  - rigorous scrutiny of all spending by the governing body; and
  - cost-effectiveness in all aspects of the school's expenditure.
224. The governing body has prudently allowed for an increase in the contingency fund to meet possible additional demands on the budget post April 2008. This is sound financial planning.
225. All interested parties are aware and fully conversant with spending priorities due the publication of the 'Finance Handbook'.
226. The school pursues every opportunity to seek additional funds through grants and sponsorships to enhance its provision for all pupils.

227. The audit of the school's financial practices at the end of 2006 emphasized the school's good practice in financial management and control. The four minor recommendations have been addressed.
228. The continued professional development of staff displays a number of outstanding features:
- the identification and implementation of a comprehensive training programme for all teaching and support staff;
  - a comprehensive performance management programme for all teaching and support staff;
  - support for individual staff wishing to undertake specific courses;
  - establishment of internal committees to broaden the professional development of staff; and
  - provision of opportunities to all support staff to develop their professional expertise.
229. The school manages a detailed and comprehensive support programmes for ITT students in conjunction with the University of Bangor, for newly qualified staff (NQT's) and other staff appointed to new posts within the school.
230. The school has successfully implemented the workforce restructuring plans following full staff consultation. The allocation of time for staff planning, preparation and assessment is good.
231. Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks have been completed for all teaching, support and volunteer staff working in the school.
232. Overall, the school provides outstanding value for money by:
- its provision of a balanced and broadly based curriculum;
  - an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities;
  - the effective and efficient way it manages, deploys and develops all its staff; and
  - its resource management to secure the provision of the highest possible standards for its staff and pupils.

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

### **Welsh second language**

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

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

233. Examination results at GCSE in 2006 were substantially higher than the local and national averages for grades A\*-C and A\*/A. In 2007, four pupils sat the GCSE examination and results were higher than the national results for grades A\*-C and slightly lower than local results.
234. As a substantial number of second language pupils transfer and follow the Welsh first language programme early in KS3, it is late-comers who have only studied Welsh for a year or two, who follow the full GCSE Welsh second language course.

## **KS3 and KS4**

### **Outstanding features**

235. In KS3 and KS4, standards of listening across the ability range are outstanding and pupils respond confidently to teachers' questions and comments.
236. The positive attitude of the late-comers to their work, in KS3 and KS4, with their willingness to make an effort and persevere is an outstanding feature and contributes towards their standards.
237. In both key stages standards of oracy are outstanding. Due to their increasing understanding of language, pupils' ready and confident retrieval of language already learnt allows them to use new vocabulary naturally within familiar sentence patterns. The range of oral exercises and games encourages them to think independently and in using these constantly pupils are making significant progress.
238. In KS3, a good number can contribute confidently to a conversation as individuals, in pairs and in classroom situations, on subjects that are familiar to them, speaking at a natural pace, this is an outstanding feature. In Y7, pupils integrate naturally with first language pupils in a supportive environment, sharing ideas, solving problems and translating quickly when working in pairs. This contributes towards their progress.
239. As pupils are secure in their use of a range of language patterns by the end of KS4, they can adapt language in order to move the discussion forward at length at a lively pace, expressing their experiences and their ideas clearly. They work together easily in pairs and class discussions and their willingness to use Welsh naturally outside formal exercises promotes standards.
240. Pupils in both key stages benefit from opportunities offered them to communicate with language mentors in Y10 in the daily *Clwb Clebran* and this contributes towards their standards.
241. In both key stages, reading standards of the majority are outstanding. They can, without preparation read appropriate and varied texts aloud, meaningfully. Most of the words are pronounced correctly with appropriate intonation and displaying effective understanding of the content in accordance with their ability.
242. The independent reading scheme '*Darllen Diwyd*' in KS3 extends the pupils' vocabulary and increases their interest in Welsh books. An outstanding feature throughout the key stage is pupils' ability to read books that correspond to their proficiency in Welsh and making personal comments.
243. Throughout both key stages, pupils respond to challenging topics, both literary and factual. By KS4, they use research skills to glean relevant information correctly and respond creatively and with interest to literary material.
244. An outstanding feature is the exceptional progress made by a good number of late-comers who develop to become bilingual. In a short period of time in KS3, they follow the Welsh first language programme of study which enables them to sit the GCSE mother tongue examinations in language and literature in KS4.

### **Good features**

245. In both key stages, the written work of the majority develops well. Pupils complete a variety of written tasks and the good practice of planning, feeding

patterns and vocabulary and modelling examples increases their understanding of the needs of different forms and contributes towards raising standards.

246. In KS3, pupils can compose a series of individual sentences within the patterns that are familiar to them. The more able can compose co-ordinated pieces in a variety of forms using a good number of language patterns. They show an increasing grasp of mutations, adjectives, verbs and idioms.
247. In KS4, pupils write at length in a wider range of formats showing a relatively good degree of accuracy in expressing an opinion and writing factually varying their sentence structures and the tense of the verb very effectively according to their ability.
248. Pupils of lower ability and those with SEN make good progress across the skills.
249. Through using ICT skills, pupils display a good awareness of audience needs and this, together with the opportunities they receive to re-draft sections of their work, promotes the standards.

### **Shortcomings**

250. There are examples of elementary grammatical mistakes in the written work of some individuals.

<b>English</b>
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**Key Stage 3: Grade 2 - Good with no important shortcomings**

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

251. Examination results at GCSE in the last three years have been broadly in line with the national averages for passes at A\*-C and A\*/A. These results are in line with most pupils' ability and are an improvement on the results of previous years. However, results at A\*/A are not consistently in line with pupils' ability.
252. Standards in KS3 have improved in speaking, listening and writing since the previous inspection.

### **KS3**

#### **Good features**

253. Pupils listen attentively and intelligently. They have clear recall of previous information and ideas and merge these with new knowledge successfully. Listening skills at all levels of ability and in both key stages are good.
254. Some pupils are reluctant to speak English in front of an audience or formally but many express themselves confidently using a wide range of relevant vocabulary. Pupils answer questions promptly and clearly and many formulate relevant and searching questions.
255. Pupils make good progress in reading for understanding and demonstrate both competence and confidence in interpreting their set texts.
256. They are aware of an author's techniques in creating character, mood and setting and use them successfully when writing their own work.
257. Pupils make steady progress in broadening and honing their writing skills. They are conscious of their audience when they write to persuade, inform and entertain.

258. Many draft their work thoroughly and use word processing skills well to improve their spelling and the presentation of their work.

259. More able pupils in Y7, Y8 and Y9 fully understand the use and power of language and achieve pleasing results.

### **Shortcomings**

260. Some pupils, who are not receiving SEN support, are insecure in their word attack skills. This affects the fluency of their reading.

### **KS3**

#### **Good features**

261. Pupils build upon the good listening skills developed in KS3 and, consequently, communicate clearly to each other in discussion. The more able can share opinions and articulate their views in more formal contexts.

262. All pupils encounter many different forms of writing. They analyse their texts well, using quotations competently to support their opinion.

263. More able pupils distinguish between prejudice and stereotyping in fiction and non-fiction and apply this understanding maturely when interpreting their novel's themes.

264. Less able pupils make progress in identifying techniques of manipulation and persuasion in two contrasting plays.

265. Many pupils in this stage produce interesting examples of extended writing. The best writing indicates a sense of purpose, structure and a mature control of language.

266. Pupils with special educational needs can express themselves clearly when writing and are making small strides in improving their spelling.

### **Shortcomings**

267. More able pupils who are capable of attaining higher standards do not consistently achieve A\* or A grades at GCSE.

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

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

268. Examination results at GCSE over the past three years have been variable. In 2006, the percentage of pupils attaining grades A\*-C was above the local and national averages. In 2007, however, standards had fallen because the results fell below local and national averages. The percentage of pupils attaining the highest grades A\*/A has been below local and national averages for the past few years and this is below expectations.

### **KS3**

#### **Good features**

269. Pupils have an understanding of science that is appropriate for their age and ability. They can recall and explain details of their previous work, for examples how the particles are arranged in solids, liquids and gases. Nearly all use scientific terms correctly both orally and in writing.

270. During science lessons, pupils make good progress and extend their knowledge and understanding. They write well about their work and also use diagrams and charts to communicate their scientific understanding. They can interpret the meaning of graphs.
271. Pupils recall details of previous learning and can use this to plan experiments. For example, they recall how to carry out the processes of dissolving, filtration and evaporation and plan experiments based on these techniques. Pupils work well together and carry out group practical experiments with a minimum of fuss. They make systematic observations and record them correctly. They pay due regard to safety procedures
272. Pupils are well motivated and remain on task for the whole of the lesson. All are eager to answer questions. They behave responsibly and show respect to adults and one another other. They make appropriate progress and understand the purpose of the work they are carrying out.

### **Shortcomings**

273. A minority of less able pupils does not fully understand their work. They have difficulty in recalling details and cannot explain some basic concepts. Some have difficulty using simple scientific words correctly.
274. A few average ability pupils lack confidence in their scientific ability and this limits their ability to speak about their work.
275. A minority of more able pupils does not strive sufficiently hard to improve their own learning. They are content to work at a slower pace and fail to make enough progress in acquiring new skills and knowledge.
276. A few pupils have not developed an appropriate appreciation of the impact of science on society and the environment.

### **KS4**

#### **Good features**

277. Pupils understand and can recall the work they need for the GCSE science examinations. In chemistry, for example, they can explain the rates of reaction of metals. In physics, they know about the refraction of light and, in biology, they can explain about the circulation of the blood. They convey their understanding of scientific topics using appropriate language, graphs, charts and tables. Most use scientific terms confidently both orally and in writing.
278. Pupils are attentive during lessons. All are well motivated and behave responsibly. Pupils follow instructions well and understand what is required of them. Most make good progress and acquire new scientific skills and understanding.
279. Nearly all pupils have good practical skills and carry out experimental work safely. They co-operate well when carrying out group practical work. Many have a thorough understanding of the "fair test" and can plan experiments where they control the appropriate variables. They make careful observations and record their results effectively. They use graphs well to present their data.

#### **Shortcomings**

280. A minority of average and lower ability pupils does not fully understand their work. They cannot remember or explain details of the topics they have covered.

Many fail to explain the scientific principles behind double glazing. These pupils are not making sufficient progress.

- 281. A minority of average ability pupils lacks an appropriate appreciation of the impact of science and technology on society and the environment.
- 282. A minority of pupils of average and lower ability is unsure of the meaning of scientific terms and cannot use or spell them correctly.
- 283. A minority of more able pupils does not strive sufficiently hard to improve their own learning. They are content to work at a slower pace and fail to make enough progress in acquiring new skills and knowledge.

## **Geography**

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

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

- 284. The percentage of pupils obtaining GCSE grades A\*-C has varied significantly over the past three years. In 2006, the percentage figure was considerably higher than the national and local authority averages, but in 2007 they were significantly lower.

### **KS3**

#### **Good features**

- 285. Most pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the difference between climate and weather. They use climatic data to draw accurate and neatly presented temperature and rainfall graphs.
- 286. Pupils have a good understanding of the location of places. The majority can transfer information on the location of tropical rainforests accurately on to an outline map of the world using an atlas. They name the relevant areas and countries accurately.
- 287. The majority of the pupils have a sound grasp of a range of geographical terminology. They use key words precisely in their study of rainforests and flooding.
- 288. Pupils with additional learning needs produce work of a good standard. Their knowledge of ecosystems, weather and climate is good.
- 289. Most pupils display a good understanding of the factors contributing to the incidence of flooding in specific areas. They can identify and prioritise the essential measures required to minimise the destructive effects of flooding.

#### **Shortcomings**

- 290. A minority of pupils is insecure in their use of geographical terminology.
- 291. A few pupils fail to transfer accurately information from an atlas to an outline world map.

### **KS4**

#### **Good features**

- 292. Nearly all pupils demonstrate a good grasp of geographical skills. Their use of maps, graphs, atlas, statistical data and ICT to complete set tasks and coursework assignments is of a good standard.

293. The majority of pupils are confident in their use of complex geographical vocabulary.
294. Pupils with additional learning needs display a good level of knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts and skills.
295. Most pupils have a good understanding of the factors that contribute to global warming. They know and understand the advantages and disadvantages of the changing climatic patterns affecting the planet. Nearly all pupils can identify accurately regions most at risk from specific factors resulting from global warming such as the melting of the world's ice caps.
296. Fieldwork contributes significantly to the good standards achieved by pupils in their coursework assessment units. They show good skill levels in the collection of primary data, its analysis, interpretation and recording in a range of formats including the extensive use of ICT.
297. Pupils are confident in their interpretation of the formation of meanders and oxbow lakes. They demonstrate a sound grasp of the contributory factors leading to the disastrous flooding in Lynmouth in 1952. Their understanding of the effects of the flooding on the local population and property is good.

### **Shortcomings**

298. A minority of pupils fails to select and develop fully the important issues from set primary data. They tend to select as many as possible thereby omitting important detail.

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

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

299. Examination results at GCSE in the last three years have been above and below the national average at grades A\*-C. These results represent inconsistent achievement that is not in line with pupils' ability. Recent results are lower than would be expected for pupils of similar ability.

### **KS3**

#### **Good features**

300. Pupils make very rapid progress in acquiring the essential craft skills. They often exploit their growing knowledge of colour, line, tone and texture with verve. Their observational drawing shows a clear understanding of shape and proportion.
301. They apply their growing knowledge of art to their own creative two-and three-dimensional activities.
302. In group discussions they reflect thoughtfully on their work, making comparison and exchanging ideas.
303. Both boys and girls demonstrate an above average standard of creative computer-generated art.
304. Pupils are familiar with a range of artists associated with Wales. They show a sensitive application of colour, shape and texture derived from the local landscape. They have a growing appreciation of the art of other cultures.

305. Pupils are acquiring and using an appropriate art vocabulary. They confidently demonstrate their bilingual skills when speaking and writing.
306. Pupils with additional learning needs achieve a standard of craft skill that is exceptionally good.

### **Shortcomings**

307. When writing about art, pupils rarely express any personal response.
308. Their progress is slower in Y8 and Y9.
309. Pupils do not have a clear understanding of how they can use the self-assessment process to improve their work to the nationally expected level or beyond.

### **KS4**

#### **Good features**

310. Pupils are developing as independent artists. They know how to research and develop a theme in depth.
311. Girls consistently achieve high standards of creativity in experimental textile work. Colour, texture and pattern are applied with flair.
312. Boys demonstrate above average standards of creative computer-generated art.
313. Many pupils express their personal views when writing about art. They regularly use thoughtful annotation to support their sketchbook work.

#### **Shortcomings**

314. Boys' creativity is limited by their reliance on found graphic images and too often copying from illustrations.
315. Pupils' awareness of contemporary and historical art is limited.
316. Pupils do not have a clear understanding of how they can use the self-assessment process to achieve higher examination grades.

<b>Religious education (including religious studies)</b>
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#### **Key Stage 3: Grade 1 - Good with outstanding features**

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

317. Examination results at GCSE in the last three years have been well above local and national averages for passes A\*-C. The Y10 pupils taking the short GCSE course in 2006-7 achieved 100% A\*-B. These results represent very good achievement for these pupils and are in line with pupils' ability.

### **KS3**

#### **Outstanding features**

318. Pupils acquire a very wide ranging knowledge and strong understanding of the beliefs and practices of Christianity, Sikhism and Hinduism.
319. Their confident responses in class and their extensive written work indicate a very strong understanding of the religious initiation rites and other religious practices, modes of worship and the characteristics of the gods of these three religions.

320. Their retention of facts and their ability to explain significant similarities and differences between religions is very good.
321. Pupils have a very good understanding of the ways in which people's lifestyles are affected by their personally held beliefs. They understand the significance of many religious symbols and make accurate and skilled use of key religious terms.
322. Through their detailed study of themes and their regular personal research, Y8 pupils are very familiar with the significance of religious texts to adherents of four of the world's six main religions. They can discuss their influence on believers confidently and sensitively.
323. They produce written work in a variety of formats. Many assignments are of outstanding quality.
324. They self evaluate regularly and use ICT effectively making good use of PowerPoint especially in their extended class and homework writing tasks.
325. Pupils with additional educational needs are making very good progress in both their written and discussion work. Their standards are raised considerably by the support they receive from learning support assistant with strong knowledge of the subject.

#### **Good features**

326. Older pupils in this key stage have a firm grasp of the key rules and regulations within both Christianity and Judaism. They make good use of the Decalogue as a starting point to explore the need for rules within any religious or secular society or community.
327. They can relate precisely the rules governing Shabbat and describe in considerable detail how worship is conducted within Liberal / Reformed and Orthodox Judaism.
328. They have a sound understanding of the themes studied such as sacred books, religious leaders and places of pilgrimage.
329. They effectively explore the theme of forgiveness using appropriate New Testament parables and Jesus' pronouncements from the gospels. They make detailed studies of recent conflict within Christian denominations in Northern Ireland and the problems of eastern religions transplanted to a western environment. They examine so-called honour killings sometimes occasioned by cultural differences.

#### **KS4**

##### **Outstanding features**

330. Year 10 and Y11 pupils know a very good range of Hebrew terms. This helps them greatly in their understanding of contemporary and historic Judaism.
331. They have an outstanding understanding of key terms and concepts.
332. Within Judaism, they can discuss effectively the contents of the Torah, Talmud and the rites associated with Bar Mitzvah and Brit Milah.
333. They appreciate the significance of the authority ascribed to religious texts by believers.

- 334. Pupils have very good knowledge of Jewish symbols and celebrations such as Pesach and Seder.
- 335. Pupils learn how to show respect to articles of faith by using artefacts from within the world's six main world religions.
- 336. They confidently express their personal points of view in pairs, groups and in front of a whole class. In a Christian and Jewish context, pupils explore and discuss in a most mature manner many contemporary moral situations linked with divorce, adultery, homosexuality, children's responsibility to parents and the rights of children themselves.
- 337. In Y11, pupils taking statutory religious education revisit arguments for and against the existence of God giving arguments in favour and against. They use their newly acquired knowledge of Buddhism to explore the nature of God.

### **Good features**

- 338. Pupils take responsibility for their own learning and regularly set themselves target for improvement. In class, they work at a good pace and regularly correct grammatical and spelling errors in their books.
- 339. They never fail to copy up lost work after being absent. Consequently, there are no gaps in pupils' subject books
- 340. Pupils have good revision, examination techniques and analytical skills, which enable them to achieve good and even very good standards in their internal and external examinations.

### **Shortcomings**

- 341. Pupils do not use the interactive whiteboard sufficiently to further consolidate learning.
- 342. There are times when pupils do not fully contribute to class discussions. This is not the case when they are working in pairs and in small groups.

### **Religious Studies**

#### **KS4**

#### **Outstanding features**

- 343. Pupils have outstanding ability to concentrate. They work well in small groups and independently.
- 344. They respond rapidly and accurately to teachers' questioning .They show evidence of well-developed thinking skills. They give clear arguments in favour and against various standpoints and have the confidence to indicate their own personal stances to the whole class.
- 345. Pupils understand the importance and effect of beliefs on faith communities and the impact they make on personal lifestyles.
- 346. They have strong revision skills and their knowledge of both Christianity and Judaism has benefited from taking the short GCSE course which all Y10 pupils follow.
- 347. They engage in meaningful debates. They have a mature attitude when discussing the way Jews and Christians mourn the dead. Pupils have a very

good understanding of the practical aspects of religious stances as is evident in the role of charities such as Christian Aid.

348. They can link a Christian's practical role to teachings in the New Testament.

349. In addition, they can sensibly and sensitively discuss matters of conscience.

### **Good features**

350. Most produce good standards of written work and their course work assignments demonstrate good understanding and application of knowledge.

351. Pupils read quickly and make rapid written responses, which they then compare with those of their peers. They often revise their opinions having given matters further consideration.

### **Shortcomings**

352. A small number of pupils have shortcomings in their spelling and punctuation. This is regularly corrected when the work is revised.

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

As staff we acknowledge and thank the inspectors for this report on the school's work. We are proud of the report and of the comments the inspectors make about the school. In particular, we are proud of the judgement that good progress has been made since the last inspection. We are also proud that the report confirms that a large number of aspects of the school's work clearly display excellence.

As a school we will look to the future and continue to strive to ensure the best possible provision for the pupils, parents and community of Blaenau Ffestiniog and the catchment area.

## Appendix 1

### Basic information about the school

Name of school	Ysgol Y Moelwyn
School type	Secondary
Age range of pupils	11-16
Address of school	Heol Wynne Blaenau Ffestiniog Gwynedd
Postcode	LL41 3DW
Telephone number	01766 830435

Headteacher	Mr D M Lake
Date of appointment	01/09/1997
Chair of governors	Mr D Jarrett
Reporting inspector	Mr William Gwyn Thomas
Dates of inspection	21/01/2008 – 24/01/2008

## Appendix 2

### School data and indicators

Year group	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Total
Number of pupils	71	100	83	86	77	n/a	n/a	417

Total number of teachers			
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time equivalent (fte)
Number of teachers	28	7	31

Staffing information	
Pupil: teacher (fte) ratio (excluding special classes)	13.4
Pupil: adult (fte) ratio in special classes	-
Average teaching group size	17.77
Overall contact ratio (percentage)	79%

Percentage attendance for three complete terms prior to the inspection								
	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13	Whole school
Term 1	92.6	92.9	90.8	93.8	89.0	-	-	91.8
Term 2	94.1	92.1	88.7	91.6	95.6	-	-	92.5
Term 3	95.1	93.5	93.1	92.0	93.0	-	-	93.3

Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	13%
Number of pupils excluded during 12 months prior to inspection	6

## Appendix 3

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

National Curriculum Assessment KS3 results 2007														
Total number of pupils in Y9: 86														
Percentage of pupils at each level														
			D	N	W	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EP
English	Teacher assessment	School	0	2.3	0	0	3.5	7.0	20.9	45.3	10.5	10.5	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
Welsh	Teacher assessment	School	0	2.5	0	0	1.3	6.3	10.1	34.2	39.2	5.1	1.3	0
		National	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.1	1.0	5.3	19.8	36.6	26.5	8.6	0.1	0
Mathematics	Teacher assessment	School	0	2.3	0	0	4.7	12.8	24.4	19.8	18.6	17.4	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
Science	Teacher assessment	School	0	2.3	0	0	0	22.1	32.6	17.4	20.9	4.7	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

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

N Level not awarded for reasons apart from disapplication

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	41		In Wales
			58

### Public Examination Results:

For pupils aged 15, results in GCSE, Entry Level Qualification, GNVQ and NVQ	
Number of pupils aged 15 on the school roll in January 2007	79
Average GCSE or GNVQ points score per pupil	53

The percentage of 15 year old pupils who in 2007:	School	UA	Wales
entered for 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent	100	90	87
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to C, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	66	61	54
attained at least 5 GCSE grades A* to G, the equivalent vocational qualifications or a combination of both	100	90	86
attained GCSE grades A*-C in each of mathematics, science, English or Welsh first language (the core subject indicator)	39	46	40
entered at least one Entry level qualification, GCSE short course or GCSE	46	15	53
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-C or the vocational qualification equivalent	90	84	77
attained one or more GCSE grades A*-G or the vocational qualification equivalent	100	96	93
attained no graded GCSE or the vocational qualification equivalent	0	4	7
attained one or more Entry level qualification only	0	2	3
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Foundation level or NVQ level 1	n/a	n/a	n/a
attained a GNVQ Part 1, a GNVQ at Intermediate level or NVQ level 2	n/a	n/a	n/a

<b>For pupils aged 17, results in A/AS, GNVQs and NVQs</b>	
Number of pupils aged 17 in January 2007	n/a
Number of pupils entered for 2 or more GCE A level examinations or equivalent in 2007	n/a
Number of pupils entered for fewer than 2 GCE A levels or equivalent in 2007	n/a

## **Appendix 4**

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

Inspectors spent a total of 36 days in the school and were joined by the school's deputy head as nominee. They held a meeting before the inspection.

During the inspection, inspectors visited:

- 75 lessons, 59 lessons in the six subjects inspected and 16 lessons in all other subjects;
- registrations and assemblies; and
- some extra-curricular activities.

Members of the inspection team met with:

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

The team also considered:

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

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

## Appendix 5

### Composition and responsibilities of the inspection team

<b>Team member</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
William Gwyn Thomas Rgl	KQ1 and KQ5 Context, summary recommendations. Appendix
Gwynoro Jones Lay Inspector	Support on KQ3 and KQ4 contributing to all other key questions
Manon Wyn Sion	KQ2 and Welsh Second Language
Peredur Francis	KQ3
David Hughes	KQ4 and Science
Dylan Gwyer Roberts	KQ6
Huw Llewelyn	KQ7 and Geography
David Treharne	Religious Education
Meiriol M Jones	KQ4, SEN and English
Eric Forster	Art
Iolo Owen	Nominee

### ***Acknowledgement***

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

#### **Contractor**

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